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NATIONS OF THE MODERN WORLD

SA'UDI ARABIA



His Majesty King 'Abdul-'Aziz II ibn Sa'ud

SA'UDI ARABIA

By

H. ST. JOHN PHILBY

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DEDICATED
TO THE MEMORY OF
'ABDUL-'AZIZ IBN SA'UD
THE GREATEST OF ALL THE KINGS OF
ARABIA

Ah, ceased is now his breath !
All hearts grow cold, which that king's mortal part
See sink, in iron sleep, of endless death :
Whose glory is only a memory now henceforth !

C. M. DOUGHTY : *The Dawn in Britain*

Foreword

THE death of 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Sa'ud on November 9th, 1953, closed a brilliant chapter in the history of the Arabs: second in importance, perhaps, only to the Meccan episode of the early seventh century, from which Islam emerged as a vital and permanent factor in human evolution. Like the Prophet Muhammad, 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Sa'ud was also a man of destiny. To the one it had fallen to reorient the spiritual outlook not only of his own countrymen but of vast populations beyond the borders of Arabia. The other, using the same spiritual weapons to establish peace and order in the midst of anarchy, was destined to guide his people out of the wilderness into a land flowing with milk and honey, where the ancient virtue and culture of the desert came inevitably into contact with, and under the influence of, the more materialistic standards of the Philistines. The old king himself was never enamoured of the new ways; but the burden of his years, his physical infirmities and his past labours progressively weakened his powers of resistance to a flood of innovations, which has so rapidly swept away all the landmarks of an ancient civilisation. Whatever the future may have in store for the kingdom of his creation—and there is no reason to despair of the capacity of the Arabs to settle down to a steady stroke of progress and prosperity,—'Abdul-'Aziz will stand out in history as the last, and probably the greatest, of a long line of Arab leaders, whose fame rests on their own personal achievements in the austere and romantic setting of the desert. He was certainly the last of the great Wahhabis, whose achievements are chronicled in this volume. The spiritual and material climate of Arabia has changed out of all recognition, and the change cannot but be permanent.

This work was designed for publication in the lifetime of the great king to whose memory it is dedicated, and whose title to fame is now universally acknowledged by a world once sceptical of his claim and capacity to rule the Arabs. His death

while its last chapter was actually in process of preparation necessitated some adjustment of the text to round off a great story without any attempt to assess the significance of his long reign, much less the prospects of the new régime under his eldest surviving son and successor, Sa'ud, the fourth of his name to rule in Arabia. It does, however, now seem desirable to preface this record of Wahhabi achievement with a tentative analysis of the contribution of the late king and of the problems left by him for his successor. Hence this foreword.

The early struggles against adversity and parochial enemies: the succeeding stage of expansion on an international scale: and a period of consolidation: all these activities, occupying a space of about forty years, have been fully set forth in these pages. Up to that point, it may be claimed—and it was Sir Percy Cox who asserted the fact—Ibn Sa'ud had never made a mistake. That in itself was an astonishing achievement for any man. In 1942, say, he was at the peak of his career and reputation; but some ten years earlier he had taken a characteristically unorthodox decision, which was now beginning to cast its shadows ahead. He had allowed the Americans to enter his domain in search of oil; the oil had been found; but its development had been arrested by the outbreak of war. Sa'udi Arabia was back in the doldrums of penury, as the flow of pilgrims to Mecca had been discontinued simultaneously. Ibn Sa'ud, who had kept his country going comfortably enough in the old days on an income of £100,000 a year, and had latterly become accustomed to an annual revenue of fifty times that amount, was in despair. Britain and America came forward with generous, even lavish, financial help during the remaining years of the war. Their bounty was squandered; some of it was misappropriated by dishonest officials. Then the oil began to flow in a satisfying trickle. The flood which ensued swept away every barrier of reason, religion and morality. The king understood the importance of money: not that he wanted it for himself; he never abandoned the simplicity of manners to which his youth had accustomed him. Always generous and hospitable in the days of poverty, he gave without stint when there was much to give: straining the resources of the State to satisfy insatiable appetites with his bounty. His numerous children, his even more numerous womenfolk, his henchmen and his guests became an intolerable burden on the

public exchequer. It was a sad sequel to the wealth which had rewarded his own virtue: but he never understood the intricacies of finance and economics. And during the last few years of his life, when the signs of decline were too obvious to escape notice, there was a general relaxation of discipline and control with disastrous effects on the economy and reputation of the country. Only on rare occasions now were flashes of the old genius evoked by the emergence of problems of the old familiar type: a matter of justice between man and man, for instance, or the revelation of some heinous crime against the moral code. To the very end he could rise to majestic heights of wrath or eloquence under such provocation; and, while he lived, his presence, even in the background, was always a warning to the would-be transgressor.

But the hand at the helm became increasingly weak and vacillating; and, one by one, at first furtively and later more brazenly, the inhibitions of the old Wahhabi régime went by the board. In the name of military efficiency the once forbidden charms of music were openly paraded on the palace square, or blared in the face of a monarch, who sickened at the sound. The forbidden cinema reared its ogling screens in scores of princely palaces and wealthy mansions to flaunt the less respectable products of Hollywood before audiences which would have blushed or shuddered at the sight but ten or fifteen years ago. Liquor and drugs have penetrated, more or less discreetly, into quarters where, in the old days, people had been slain at sight for the crime of smoking tobacco, which has become now a substantial source of State revenue. Even the seclusion of women has been tempered to the prevailing breeze of modernism; and the motor-car provides facilities for visits to some beach or desert pleasaunce, where they dance or frolic to the tunes of a gramophone (another prohibited article) in the latest summer frocks from Paris, or dine *alfresco* in strapless bodices.

These are but some instances of the social revolution which has developed in Arabia within the last decade. There are others which cannot be 'told in Gath, nor whispered in the streets of Askelon.' None of these things would be regarded as strange or shocking in Europe or America, and in sooth there is nothing very wrong with them, though one scarcely thought they could ever happen in Sa'udi Arabia, where all these

things were, and are nominally still, classed among the deadly sins by the Wahhabi code, to which the kingdom owes its existence and triumph under the wise guidance of its greatest king. It is a far cry indeed to the days of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab and the puritan zeal which sought to curb the pagan practices of his time. The wheel has come full circle back to its starting point; and it is unlikely that it will ever roll back on its ancient 'path of blood.' The circumstances of the world have changed, and the Arabs have made their choice to hitch their destiny to the star of the west, as they have every right to do. The material charms of western civilisation have proved irresistible, and have created on earth a satisfying imitation of the paradise which the old Wahhabis only expected to gain in the hereafter.

The old king lived to see his gold transmuted into baser metal, but he was probably never quite aware of the full extent of the transformation of the society over which he had presided so long. In some measure, of course, he could not fail to realise the subtle changes at work on the younger generations of his family and people; and, in so far as the new ways did not meet with his approval, he was more than ready to take the blame for himself. He often did so in private and in public. Often, with tears in his eyes and a tremor on his lips, he would implore his prelates to do their duty by his people and save them from damnation, as they did of old. But only he, as he knew full well, could check the incoming tide of laxity; and history will not acquit him of prime responsibility for the decline in manners and morals from the high standards prescribed and enforced during the first four decades of his reign. It will, however, take into account the extenuating circumstances of old age and general debility. And his personal record of virtue and achievement will never be challenged. There was nothing formal about the tens of thousands of letters and telegrams of condolence which reached his son during the weeks following his death: to say nothing of the thousands of distinguished visitors who came from far and wide to pay their tribute in person to the great departed. It was a touching demonstration of admiration and affection for one who was *omnium consensu capax imperii*: a man of great distinction, of outstanding humanity and of ineffable charm.

He is dead now, and the like of him will never be seen again in

Arabia, whose future is unpredictable, though there is no real ground for pessimism. But the task confronting the new régime is a formidable one, and no one knows that better than the new king, who had shared his father's responsibilities for the best part of twenty years before being called upon to assume the major burden himself with the support of his brother, the Amir Faisal, now Crown Prince and next prospective ruler of the land. In spite of various ill-founded prognostications there never had been any prospect of trouble over the succession. The old king's huge family was so united in loyalty to him, that there never could have been any question of a challenge to the arrangements prescribed by him for the future of his realm. And Sa'ud had ample evidence that the formal congratulations offered to him on his accession to the throne were accompanied by the heart-felt prayers and good wishes of his people, his Arab and Muslim neighbours, and the world at large for a long and prosperous reign.

From that moment he was committed to a task which will tax his capacity to the utmost. The absolutism of his father had concentrated all real power in the person of the monarch; and there never was any question of any effective delegation of authority, though the Minister of Finance exercised a wide and virtually dictatorial control over the financial and economic administration of the country as the trusted deputy of his sovereign. There were occasions also on which the Crown Prince himself had to act on his own discretion in his constitutional rôle of prince regent. But the country was in urgent need of a properly constituted government, which would be in a position to tide over any transitional period in the event of the king's demise. This need was recognised all too late; and when a government was formed at last under the premiership of the Crown Prince the king's death overtook it before it had had time to take effective shape. The Prime Minister became king; and the constitutional problem had to stand over for later consideration while King Sa'ud was busy taking the measure of his task. His old colleagues, under the presidency of the new Crown Prince, were set to the task of overhauling the administrative machine and devising improvements therein, while he himself made extensive tours of his realm to see and be seen of his people.

Visits to Egypt and Pakistan, and a meeting with the King

of Jordan, provided opportunities of taking stock of the international commitments of Sa'udi Arabia. There were consultations also with the rulers of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the Yaman, while the fallen dictator of Syria was entertained for a while as a political refugee at Riyadh. Relations with the new régime in Syria and with the Lebanon also came under review. And last but not least the crisis at Buraimi was at this time under constant, and somewhat acrimonious, discussion with the British Government. The king never spared himself in his efforts to measure up to his responsibilities, and he was certainly the busiest man in his kingdom, though he never seemed to tire of the strain. His people waited patiently for the moment when he would be free to deal with the problems of internal administration which demanded his attention.

It was not till March 7th, all but four months since his accession, that the new government was formally inaugurated by him with suitable pomp and ceremony and a speech from the throne, which at least provided some indication of the lines on which the king and his advisers were thinking. It still left people guessing what the new government would do, and how it would do it. So far as the domestic administration of the realm was concerned, it was made quite clear that the country would no longer be left to the tender mercies of the Finance Ministry, which was to be dismembered and its fragments distributed among other departments, including some new ones. Two more of the king's brothers were nominated as Ministers, while the king himself and the Crown Prince remained as President of the Council of Ministers and vice-President respectively. There are no fewer than seven royal princes in a Cabinet of about ten persons, swollen to double that size by the admission of various advisers and departmental officials. It will necessarily be some time before the new government begins to function effectively in its various departments; but the dissolution of the Finance Ministry has already established a sort of moratorium on all transactions involving the disbursement of money, including the payment of Government debts.

Meanwhile the king's own activities, including his travels abroad and lavish gifts to neighbouring countries, tend to absorb such funds as may be available for general purposes at

any given moment, as the old régime had left no reserve for the liquidation of the substantial debts it bequeathed to the successor administration. The present financial situation of the country can scarcely be regarded as satisfactory: resulting, as the king knows full well, from the spread of appalling corruption through all levels of the administration. The country is rich beyond the wildest dreams of the Wahhabi era; but no wealth can bear the strain of uncontrolled venality. And the test of the king's capacity to rule must primarily depend on his will and power to root out the dishonest elements which have battered so long on honest folk born and bred in austerity and utterly unaccustomed to the proper use of riches. These people themselves are by no means without blame, but the trouble began with the adventurers who came down to the Arabian Eldorado from the neighbouring lands.

In the foreign field the king's speech showed some slight variations of the policy followed hitherto under the wise and cautious guidance of his father. In particular it emphasised the determination of the new régime to foster the spirit of antagonism to Israel, to which all the Arab countries are at least in principle committed, though each country has a slightly different attitude towards the problem, as it affects its own parochial interests. This is a departure, no doubt influenced by the non-Sa'udi elements in governmental circles, from the more restrained policy of the old king, who cannot be accused of any tenderness for the Jews, though his approach to a problem of world-wide concern was largely controlled by a realisation of the fact that the Arabs themselves could do but little to change a situation deriving from the fiat of certain Great Powers, on whom the Arabs themselves have depended for much of their own prosperity.

This new attitude towards the Palestine problem has no doubt been encouraged by the great improvement in the relations between Sa'udi Arabia and Jordan since the tragic death of King 'Abdullah, who was always the principal obstacle to any harmony in the Arab world. The financial assistance given and promised to Jordan by King Sa'ud for the purpose of discouraging any tendency to parley with Israel in deference to British or American pressure may be regarded as a sequel to an entente with Egypt on the Canal issue, which was

Introduction

N EARLY a quarter of a century has passed since my *Arabia* was published by Ernest Benn Limited in their *Modern World Series*. And since then no comprehensive attempt has ever been made, at any rate outside the limits of the Arab world, to assess the historical development of the country up to the present time or to relate that development to its past history. To some extent I have myself endeavoured to fill the gap in my *Arabian Days* (1948) and *Arabian Jubilee* (1952), both published by Robert Hale Limited. But it will probably be generally admitted that the time is ripe for a reasoned survey of the achievement of the dynasty of Ibn Sa'ud from its romantic *début* just over two hundred years ago to our own times. And the present moment is indeed propitious for such an attempt. The old order is changing with a rapidity that bewilders the beholder, making way for a new dispensation whose implications for the future are entirely unpredictable. And the old king, the greatest of his line and probably the greatest Arab of all time with the sole exception of the Prophet Muhammad, has been gathered to his fathers: leaving the controls of State to younger hands after more than fifty years of distinguished rule, which will live for ever in the annals of the Arabs. Whatever the future may have in store for the modern State, which he carved single-handed out of the materials of a very ancient dispensation, his own record and reputation are secure for all time and beyond assail.

'The story of modern Arabia is nearly ended.' With these words I began the last chapter of *Arabia* a quarter of a century ago: little suspecting that a transformation was at hand, which would mark the real *beginning* of a modern dispensation, relegating all that had preceded it to the realm of ancient history. It was certainly difficult at that time to assess the implications of the defeat of certain Wahhabi stalwarts at Sibila during the last year of the period dealt with: who had risen against their liege lord in imagined defence of the faith of which he was the lawful defender and acknowledged champion. Did it presage a fall in the temperature of puritan zeal? Such a fall did in fact occur in

the years that followed; but the question could certainly not have been answered in the affirmative in those days without pre-knowledge of concomitant developments equally unpredictable at the time. No one could have foreseen then, for instance, the imminent invasion of the country by Americans in search of oil, or the dramatic results of their enterprise, which have revolutionised the economy of Arabia. Nor had Hitler come to power in Germany with his menace of a second world war.

Yet these two factors, beginning to operate within four years of the Sibila episode, were destined to play the principal part in shaping the course of Arabia in a direction for which it had been partly prepared, perhaps, by an influx of non-indigenous elements: attracted from the non-peninsular Arab countries and other Muslim lands by the prospect of employment in the Wahhabi administration after the conquest of the Hijaz. The pace of the transformation has been too rapid to be absorbed without some discomfort: but there can be no doubt of the reality of the change which has swept over the country within a period of a little more than two decades. The old forms lingered on for perhaps a decade with little more than formal validity until, with the war and the oil and the Americans and all that, it has become well-nigh impossible to recognise in the present shape of things any trace of the austere origins from which it has been evolved.

It was always, of course, obvious that the most recent ebullition of Wahhabi fanaticism would, like its predecessors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, spend itself in due course: either for want of fuel to feed its fires, as in the case of the first Wahhabi empire, which had reached out beyond the possible limits of effective conquest and lost heart in the depressing circumstances of retreat from far-flung frontiers before the superior forces massed against it from many directions; or from the sheer inability of the human, and particularly the Badawin, spirit to maintain itself indefinitely at high tension in the absence of a real crisis or owing to internal dissensions, as in the nineteenth century. Yet neither of these factors seems to have operated in cooling the zeal of the Wahhabi revival of the first three decades of the twentieth century: fostered and deliberately used by a consummate leader of men for the glory of God and the creation of an empire within the practicable limits set by the circumstances of his time: and liquidated with the same deliberation

when zeal seemed to be outrunning discretion and threatening with ruin the handiwork of his youth and prime. It is surely the measure of his greatness that he was prepared at a critical moment of his career to take stern, and even distasteful, action to check the frenzy of his fanatical, and in truth loyal, followers within the bounds of empire set by himself and maintained intact, without the loss of a single inch of territory, from that day to this. He certainly succeeded where all his predecessors had failed: and there is no reason to suppose that the Arabian empire he created will suffer any territorial diminution in the hands of his successors.

The secret of his success lay perhaps in the fact that he understood, as none of his forbears ever did, the true character of the volatile Badawin and semi-Badawin society over which it was his lot to preside so long. The fickleness and fecklessness of the desert Arab, of town and country alike, had been demonstrated by the experience of his ancestors despite the interludes of religious emotion which they had been able to arouse and turn to their own purposes for a while. But he had been the first to realise that the propagation of a fanatical creed could serve the double purpose of creating an empire and of destroying the domestic discords which constituted the main obstacle to its permanence. And by the time that his realm had reached its logical limits, the tribal system of the Arabs had been broken beyond all possibility of repair, while he was able without serious risk to disband the forces and ideals which had carried him to victory. The dreaded words, *Ikhwan* and *Wahhabi*, have scarce been heard in the land for twenty years, and are only remembered now with something like a blush.

It should be noted in passing that the puritans of Najd never referred to themselves as Wahhabis (followers of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab) any more than the first adherents of Islam in the Hijaz had called themselves Muhammadans. These terms were in origin derogatory *sobriquets* applied by their opponents to the unitarian movements concerned, and only accepted by their adherents as badges of honour after their ultimate triumph: very much as the term *Old Contemptibles* came to be accepted by a very gallant band of soldiers during and after the first world war. In both cases the followers of the true creed called themselves simply Muslims and their religion Islam, while the people of Najd claimed in particular to be Hanbalis (or

followers of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, the founder of one of the four orthodox schools of Islamic thought). It is as Wahhabis, however that they are known to history; and events at various stages of their career on the 'path of blood' have inevitably left the impression that their fanaticism, though it was very real during its intermittent ebullitions, was in fact little more than a façade of self-righteousness covering the rubble and plaster of a very ordinary structure, which crumbled into shapeless and chaotic ruin on more than one occasion as soon as its defensive crust had been pierced by enemy action.

It was widely prophesied, when the late king inaugurated his Ihkwan movement in 1912 at Artawiya, that something of the same kind would happen again. The material used in the new enterprise was recognisably the same, while the façade was identical: yet the outcome has been very different, as we see in the stable State of today, no longer content with isolation behind its desert curtain, but rubbing shoulders with all sorts and conditions of men in strange lands and unfamiliar assemblies. The political climate of the world had certainly changed since the old days as the result of the first world war, though it could scarcely have been regarded as propitious to the expansion of exclusive fanaticism. Perhaps the architect was more skilful to use the changed conditions to his own advantage; and certainly his conquest of the Hijaz at exactly the right moment was a masterpiece, which filled the Wahhabi treasury with the proceeds of the pilgrimage, and challenged world opinion to find a flaw in the peace that he had created in Arabia, or in the scheme which he had devised for its future governance in the interests of Islam. He then proceeded at his leisure to demolish the Frankenstein he had invoked, like his predecessors, as the instrument of victory and empire; and decided to seek elsewhere the materials required for building a new régime on foundations more solid than the sands of his desert realm.

In 1930 there was nothing to suggest that the new era would be markedly different from anything that had preceded it. If Wahhabi fanaticism had been abandoned as an instrument of policy, there was to be no slackening in the respect due to Islam, or in the strict observance of its precepts and obligations by all who sought the hospitality of Arabia. The economic situation, though improved by the revenues of the Hijaz, clearly precluded any grandiose conceptions of reconstruction or develop-

ment. The political complications arising out of the new contacts with foreign Powers necessitated caution, especially in such matters as the pilgrimage and the frontiers, lest a false step might jeopardise the stability of the realm. But Fortune was already round the corner with one of her sweetest smiles to greet the birth of Sa'udi Arabia!

The new era had begun. The progress of the infant State to its majority forms the climax of a great story which began 'in days of yore and times long gone before': when the first Sa'ud, baron of Dar'iya in Wadi Hanifa, became the eponymous founder of Arabia's premier clan. That story has been told in such detail as was possible within the scope of a single volume in my *Arabia*. Obviously it cannot now be omitted altogether; but it must be somewhat curtailed to make room for an adequate discussion of the events and tendencies of our own times, which have led Arabia out of her ancient isolation into the limelight of the international stage.

To those who would have more information about the old romantic days of the Sa'udi dynasty I can indeed hold out the hope that some day in the near future, perhaps, they will be able to satisfy their curiosity. I have had the privilege and pleasure of seeing in typescript two admirable works by American scholars of a younger generation, covering the whole story of Wahhabi Arabia from its earliest days to the eclipse of the Sa'udi dynasty in 1891. The first * is an account of the rise and fall of the first Wahhabi empire, based on all available original sources, by Mr George Rentz † of the Arabian American Oil Company at Dhahran. The second, ‡ by Mr Bailey Winder of Princeton University, carries on the tale from the fall of Dar'iya in 1818 to the fatal battle of Mulaida in 1891. In both cases, as also in my own *Arabia*, the story of the first full century of Wahhabi activities is mainly based on the works of two distinguished native annalists: Husain ibn Ghannam, whose account of the early days ends abruptly in the middle of a battle at Ranya between the Wahhabis and the Sharif of Mecca in 1797, five years

* *Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703/4-1792) and the Beginnings of Unitarian Empire in Arabia* (Berkeley, California, 3/12/1947).

† Mr Rentz is also mainly responsible for a comprehensive record of *Oman and the Southern Shore of the Persian Gulf* (1951), prepared by the Research Department of the Arabian American Oil Company, and containing much information about Wahhabi activities in the area.

‡ *A history of the Sa'udi State from 1233/1818 to 1308/1891.*

after the death of Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab himself; and 'Uthman ibn Bishr, who rewrote the whole story and brought it down to the year 1851, when for some unexplained reason he seems to have abandoned the practice of recording contemporary events, though it was not till 1873 that he died. So far, therefore, as the developments of the second half of the nineteenth century are concerned, there has been a regrettable gap in the native records, which has had to be filled from a variety of sources, including travellers' tales and the memories of grey-beards.

Recently however a number of historical manuscripts by native annalists have come to light with valuable additional material. Chief among them is the *'Iqd al Durur* (string of pearls!) of Ibrahim ibn Salih ibn 'Isa, whose first volume continues the story from the point at which Ibn Bishr left off down to the year 1885. The rest of his work, dealing with the darkest days of Wahhabi history, was apparently suppressed in brighter times to drown the memory of a shameful and disastrous interlude. It seems however that this second volume has survived intact as the draft of another work, entitled *Al Sa'd w'al Majd* and compiled by one 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Nasir by the simple process of scoring out all objectionable passages and replacing them with marginal corrections and additions. Fortunately in the manuscript which I have had at my disposal through the kindness of the Amir Musa'id, one of the late king's younger brothers, all the cancelled passages are clearly legible; and the work thus constitutes an important original source of knowledge for the critical period of the last two decades of the nineteenth century, whether it is ascribable to Ibn 'Isa or not. It brings the record down to the year 1936, thus linking the new age with the now continuous chronicle of the Wahhabi era.

The same ground has been covered in another work by a member of a collateral branch of the royal family, Sa'ud ibn Hidhlul Al Thunaiyan Al Sa'ud by name, a great-great-great-great-great-grandson of the first Sa'ud. He also may have based his record of the earlier years on another copy of Ibn 'Isa's second volume, and brings the story down to 1940 with a few sporadic notes on even later events. There is also a manuscript entitled *Shadha al Nadd* (a drop of perfume!) by Mutlaq ibn Salih, prepared possibly from similar sources and dealing with the years from 1880 to his death in

1917, from which year to 1940 it was continued by his son, 'Ali Ahmad.

And finally, yet another work has been brought to my attention by Mr George Rentz: though too late for use in preparing this history. It is by Amir Dhari ibn Rashid; and entitled "A historical sketch of Najd" (*Nubdha Tarikhiya 'an Najd*), it is dated 1913.

Such apparently is all the indigenous historical material known to be available to students of the Wahhabi movement during the two centuries of travail which preceded the birth of Sa'udi Arabia. It is possible that other manuscript records may still exist, hidden away in unsuspected corners; but the possibility of the survival of such works would seem to be slight in view of successive periods of zealous iconoclasm directed against all things secular. Ibn Bishr certainly mentions his own unprofitable study of various works of the kind, of which nothing is now known. And in particular he refers with faint appreciation to a work by one Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Sallum al Fardhi al Hanbali, which has apparently disappeared.

It is possible, of course, that works of this kind may have found their way to and been preserved in such countries as India, Egypt and Turkey. But pending their discovery and publication we must rest content with the works mentioned above as our only indigenous sources of knowledge of a dispensation which would now seem to have passed away for ever, as it were of its own volition and not at the dictate of its enemies: against whose act of desecration long ago the 'topless towers' of Dar'iya still point to heaven in protest, while the two tall minarets of the new great mosque of Riyadh, greatly enlarged and built of reinforced concrete, and the new masonry palace, which is rising on the demolished clay ruins of Turki's castle, stand forth as outward and visible symbols of a new age and a new idea. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* There was much that was good and great in the old régime; and it is only to be hoped that the future will be worthy of the spirit which inspired the past.

The Barony of Dar'iya

TAMERLANE had been dead but less than half a century; the Moors were still in Spain for another half-century; and Columbus was yet to discover America some fifty years on: when, in the year 1446, an insignificant citizen of al Qatif, or rather a suburb thereof called Dar'iya, went off on a visit to a cousin, Ibn Dira', who had settled long since at Manfuha, near Riyadh, in Central Arabia. The cousin, chief of the Duru' settlers in the now abandoned hamlets of al Jiz'a and Hajar al Yamama, was evidently a man of substance, with property needing development along the course of Wadi Hanifa. At any rate he presented his visitor with the two fiefs of Ghasiba and al Mulaibid, situated about a dozen miles upstream of his own domain. Such were the simple beginnings of the Duru' settlement in the great wadi, which came to be known in later years as Dar'iya in remembrance of the parent village near the Persian Gulf, which had nurtured its founders.

It is not quite certain whether the actual recipient of these estates was Mani' al Muraidi himself, who had certainly initiated the correspondence with his Jiz'a cousin, or his son Rabi'a. It was the latter in any case who laid the foundations of the colony's prosperity by assiduous development and aggressive expansion at the expense of his neighbours. But to Mani' and his father, Rabi'a, belongs the honour of being the earliest traceable ancestors of the House of Sa'ud, which has so conspicuously dominated the Arabian scene through all the vicissitudes of the last 200 years. Sa'ud the eponymous founder of the dynasty was his great-great-great-great-grandson; and the present king of Sa'udi Arabia is his direct descendant in the fifteenth generation, while the House which he founded seems reasonably assured of immortality: having already reached the seventeenth generation in numbers calculated to ensure its indefinite perpetuation into times which none of us are likely to see.

For some reason, unrecorded in the annals of Arabia, the valley of Wadi Hanifa seems to have attracted widespread atten-

tion about the middle of the fifteenth century. Its then owners, apparently in possession of the whole length of the valley from its head in the Haisiya pass to the borders of al Kharj, belonged to the tribal group of Al Yazid al Hanifiyin. They had presumably disposed of the two fiefs above-mentioned to Ibn Dira' at some time previous to the visit of Mani'; and in this same year of 1446 they had sold the extensive property of al-'Ayaina to one Hasan ibn Tauq of Malham, the ancestor of the Al Mu'ammār princes of that settlement, whose star was in the ascendant in the Central Arabian sky until it was occulted by the waxing moon of the Wahhabi dispensation. All that now remained to Al Yazid of their Hanifa holdings was the section of the Wadi above Ghasiba to the estate and village of Jubaila inclusive: their main dwelling-centres being the villages of al Wusail and al Na'miya. But even this territory they were not destined to possess much longer; as Rabi'a, coveting their vineyard, initiated hostilities against them, which were carried to a victorious conclusion by his son Musa: who had incidentally deposed his father and usurped the chieftainship, though his attempt to murder him was only partially successful. Rabi'a, badly wounded in many places, made good his flight to 'Ayaina, where he was hospitably received and befriended by Hamad the son of Hasan ibn Tauq. Al Yazid scattered before the onslaught of Musa, leaving eighty of their men dead; and since then there has been no identifiable trace of them in the story of Wadi Hanifa, though the family of Dughathir in Dar'īya claims descent from them. And thus in two generations the migrants from Qatif had become the masters of the district in which they had been offered asylum. To say the least, they seem to have been folk of progressive, not to say aggressive, instincts: while the vigour and violence of the methods employed by them to gain their ends were probably normal enough by the prevailing standards of the time in Arabia.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century, when Musa was succeeded by his son Ibrahim, the pre-eminence of the family had been effectively established in the valley southward of Jubaila, which with all the territory northwards of it, and even Huraimila within the folds of the Tuwaiq plateau, belonged to the dynasty of Hasan ibn Tauq, probably represented at the time by Mu'ammār ibn Hamad, the eponymous ancestor of the 'Ayaina dynasty, though a blank space in the manuscript of Ibn

Bishr leaves us in some doubt on the point. These 'States' were probably little more than local baronies, paralleled along the Persian Gulf coast and in the province of al Ahsa by the similar principality of Ajwad ibn Zamil al Jabri al 'Amiri. Apart from them there would seem to have been at this time no organised political entities in desert Arabia, though a number of city-states existed in complete independence side by side with these more ambitious aggregations. Of such were Harma and Majma'a, whose foundations go back respectively to 1368 and 1426, while Riyadh, Manfuha and Yamama were all important municipal elements of the Arabian body politic of those times; as also some of the Sudair communities, to say nothing of the Qasim and Jabal Shammar. The records of their activities are defective in the material at our disposal, though we shall find them all, and some others, in due course insinuating themselves into the epic of Dar'iya in semi-Homeric fashion.

Returning, then, to the main stream which most concerns us, we find Ibrahim ibn Musa securely ensconced as the ruler of his own little principality: still unchallenged by outside forces, and steadily breeding the necessity of expansion beyond his narrow borders. One of his sons, 'Abdul-Rahman, went forth to found and develop the settlement of Dhurma, destined to play a conspicuous part in the subsequent history of the land, and incidentally to acquire a reputation for the dour courage and sturdy independence of its yeomen citizens. Another son, Saif, was the progenitor of the Al abu-Yahya settlers of Abal-Kabash, north of Dar'iya, a rather mysterious ruin of today with a great clay mound, composed of the disintegrated walls and towers of an older fort. 'Abdullah, a third son, was the ancestor of Al Watib and other elements, which survive in fragmentary and insignificant form into our times. But the fourth son, Markhan, deserves pride of place as the fountain of the ultimate Sa'udi dispensation through his younger son Miqrin, whose son, Muhammad, was the father of the first Sa'ud.

Now if, as seems to be the case, 'Abdul-Rahman was the eldest of Ibrahim's four sons, his migration to and settlement in Dhurma appears to have been tantamount to an abdication of his rights in Dar'iya; and the same would seem to be true of Saif's establishment in Abal-Kabash, though this was not greatly distant from the capital. Incidentally there appears to have been bad blood between these two branches of the family, neither of

which survived the third generation from 'Abdul-Rahman and Saif, as the latter's great-grandsons murdered Ibrahim, the great-grandson of 'Abdul-Rahman, and presumably went into exile to escape the consequences of their crime. Little is known of 'Abdullah, except that his descendants still exist in obscurity. And it was Markhan who succeeded to the family honours on the death of their father, while he in turn was succeeded by his elder son, Rabi'a. The latter is specifically referred to as Amir of Dar'iya in a note recording the fact of his making the pilgrimage to Mecca with his brother Miqrin in 1630: the year of a great flood in the holy city on April 12th, which virtually destroyed the Ka'ba, and necessitated its complete dismantlement and reconstruction. The work took no less than seven years to execute, and the impressive ceremony of its reconsecration did not take place till the pilgrimage season (May) of 1636. This flood occurred during the Amirate of Sharif Sa'ud ibn Idris ibn Husain ibn abu-Nami.

In view of the laxity and backsliding so prevalent at the dawn of Wahhabism in the middle of the eighteenth century, it is interesting to note the importance attached to religious observances by the inhabitants of Arabia during the preceding centuries. In 1506, for instance, we have a record of a great pilgrim train from al Ahsa, in which some 30,000 pilgrims rode to Mecca under the auspices of Ajwad ibn Zamil, the chief of the principality. The great Unitarian revivalist, Ibn Taimiya, had died nearly two centuries earlier (in 1337); but his teaching had evidently been kept very much alive in Arabia, and Ibn Bishr gives us a list of outstanding ecclesiastics who were contemporaries of Ajwad ibn Zamil, in noticing the death and burial at Jubaila in 1541 of Shaikh Ahmad ibn Yahya ibn 'Atwa ibn Zaid, who had imbibed his education from most of them. He also notices with unconcealed approval Sultan Salim's appointment in 1517 of the Hanbali Qadhi of Cairo as the Chief Justice of Egypt: remarking that this Shaikh Ahmad ibn al Najjar was the last Chief Qadhi of pure Arabian provenance, being an Ansari of Bani Najjar. The Ottoman Turks, having now occupied Egypt and usurped the Caliphate, had not yet turned their attention to Arabia; but they were on its threshold. And in the last decade of the sixteenth century they invaded and occupied al Ahsa, of which Fatih Pasha became the first military governor on the suppression of the dynasty of Al Ajwad ibn Zamil al Jabri al

'Amiri al 'Uqaili al Qaisi. There seems to be no record of the name of the last baron of this dynasty, nor of his predecessors back to Ajwad himself, nor of the latter's predecessors except Zamil, presumably his father, nor of the duration of its rule in al Ahsa. This was in 1591; and the next pilgrimage from al Ahsa of which we have knowledge was made some forty years later under the conduct of Bakr ibn 'Ali Pasha, the son of Fatih Pasha's immediate successor.

It was this same 'Ali Pasha who in 1622 had entertained with unprecedented splendour the Sharif of Mecca, Muhsin ibn Husain ibn Hasan, and his Dhawi 'Abdul-Muttalib cousins on the occasion of their visit to Hufhuf in the course of an expedition into Arabia Deserta. At this time the Hijaz was completely independent under its Sharifs, who seem to have regarded themselves as the natural overlords of their desert hinterland, into which they were in the habit of making incursions either for punitive purposes, or for the replenishment of their treasuries. The first such raid, of which we are told by Ibn Bishr, took place in 1578, when Sharif Hasan abu-Nami reached Riyadh with an army of 50,000 (*sic*) men, and spent a considerable time there, plundering and killing. Before departing he appointed one Muhammad ibn Fadhl as Amir on his behalf, and left several of the leading citizens in prison for a year, at the end of which they were released on condition of the payment of an annual tribute. Three years later the same Sharif again invaded Najd: directing his attention this time to the province of al Kharj, whose principal towns he occupied, as well as strategic points on the surrounding ridges. Leaving representatives behind to look after the administration of the district, he had started on his march homeward when he received news of a Bani Khalid raiding party seeking to attack him and capture his transport. The Badawin found him on his guard, and suffered a resounding defeat, in which they lost many men killed and practically all their own animals. It was soon after this incident that the Bani Khalid, as a tribe of al Ahsa, came under Turkish rule: while the vigorous reign of Hasan ibn abu-Nami came to an end with his death at Mecca.

He was succeeded as Amir of Mecca by his son Idris, on whose behalf his brother abu-Talib conducted a raid into Najd in 1602. Now Idris, on his accession, had associated with himself as co-regents another brother, Fuhaid, and his nephew Muhsin ibn

Husain. Fuhaid had subsequently been relieved of his coregency, and Muhsin had remained in loyal cooperation with his uncle until the latter's death at Yatab in Jabal Shammar, having apparently joined abu-Talib in the expedition already mentioned. Muhsin, evidently the strong man of the family, now usurped the Amirate; and in 1606 we find him raiding Najd in person. The village of al Qasab, in Sha'ib al 'Atk, was his main objective, and was duly captured and subjected to various atrocities. Meanwhile the districts of Central Arabia were still in travail, settling down somewhat restlessly into the patterns which they would carry into the Wahhabi period, still a long way off. The Al Hunaihin brothers, Muhammad and 'Abdullah, sons of al 'Aqir, dispossessed the 'Urainat settlers of the Sudair village of al Bir, and developed its plantations, which ultimately passed to Muhammad's son Hamad, whose descendants were certainly still in possession in the middle of the nineteenth century. And in the same year (1606) the Al Tumaiyim family founded the hamlet settlements of al Husun near the large oasis of Janubiya in Sudair, and downstream of the Qara castle on its conspicuous mound. It was somewhat later (1630) that the oases of al Hariq and Na'am, south of the Kharj province, were first occupied by their present Hazazina occupants: while the section of the Riyadh oasis known as al Maqran had changed hands a few years earlier on the murder of leading members of its chief family, the sons of Mufarrajj ibn Nasir, and the ultimate usurpation of the chiefship by a member of the Al Mudairis clan.

Meanwhile Sharif Muhsin had died some time after his visit to al Ahsa in 1622, already mentioned, and had been succeeded by his cousin Sa'ud ibn Idris. The latter was soon supplanted by Muhsin's own son, Zaid, who in turn was deposed in favour of Sharif Nami in 1631, but regained the Amirate from him after an interval of only a hundred days, and retained it until his death in 1665. Najd now enjoyed a relatively long respite from Sharifian attentions, and interest in its affairs shifted to the activities of the prince of 'Ayaina, Ahmad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammar, who was making a bid for expansion. In 1642 he invaded the Sudair province, but achieved only a minor success in the capture of the village of Umm Himar at the lower end of the Hauta oasis. And four years later his career was brought to an unexpected end with his death while on pilgrimage at al

Maghasil, the station of Sail al Kabir today. In the following year (1647) his son and successor, Nasir, was murdered by his nephew, Dawwas ibn Muhammad, who usurped the principate of al 'Ayaina.

It was at about this time that Sharif Zaid ibn Muhsin renewed his activities in the desert, whither went Sharif Muhammad al Hurath on his behalf in 1646 to visit Tharmida, where any hostile intentions he may have harboured were exorcised in an interview with one of the great ecclesiastics of the time, Shaikh Muhammad ibn Isma'il. But in the following year Sharif Zaid took the field in person for a large-scale expedition into Najd, where he first dealt with Raudhat al Sudair, whose chief, Muhammad ibn Madhi ibn Muhammad ibn Thari, was killed in action, and where the victors were guilty of many atrocities. Zaid next turned south to Banban, covering the approach to Riyadh, while on his homeward journey he visited 'Ayaina, from whose citizens he extracted a large sum of money and 300 camel-loads of wheat. 'Ayaina had at this stage fallen sadly from grace; and in the following year the usurper, Dawwas ibn Muhammad, after less than nine months of rule, was slain by his cousin, Muhammad ibn Hamad ibn 'Abdullah, who took over the government and banished the usurper's brother Muhanna and other members of that branch of the family. Muhammad was not destined to have a long reign, and was succeeded on his death by his cousin 'Abdullah ibn Ahmad in 1661. The latter was immediately in trouble with the folk of al Bir in Sudair, whose well-camels he had lifted in the course of an ordinary raid, and who in retaliation had waylaid and appropriated the contents of an 'Ayaina caravan bringing up piece-goods and other merchandise from the coast. 'Abdullah now organised a punitive expedition, on which he was accompanied by the Qadhi of 'Ayaina, to teach the villagers a lesson. Fortunately for the latter, one of their walls collapsed soon after the assault force had been grouped under it in preparation for the attack; and the heavy casualties incurred converted the projected assault into a parley, in which the Qadhi played a prominent part in arranging a peaceful settlement between the prince and the villagers: presumably on the basis of mutual restitution of all stolen property.

We have strangely little information about developments at Dar'iya in the period following the pilgrimage of its Amir,

Rabi'a, in 1630; and the next reference we have to the situation there relates to the year 1654, when Rabi'a's son and successor, Watban, is represented as having murdered his cousin, Markhan ibn Miqrin, and usurped the Amirate of Ghasiba. The account of this episode is short but highly involved; but it is perhaps permissible to reconstruct the course of events in the following manner. Watban would seem to have succeeded his father in the ordinary course of things at some date between the years noted in this paragraph; and he may well have been challenged thereafter and deposed by his uncle's son, Markhan, whom in turn he murdered in 1654 to recover his position as chief of Dar'İya. An unrecorded tradition however represents him as fleeing from the inevitable vendetta provoked by his act, and settling down at Zubair, of which his grandson, Ibrahim ibn Thaqib, became Amir in due course, while his more famous son and successor, Muhammad, acquired a political position of influence unpalatable to the Turkish governor of his time, and was in 1836 inveigled into the Sarai at Basra and done to death with many of his relations and followers.

Be that as it may, there is evidence to justify us in supposing that the murdered Markhan ibn Miqrin, or his murderer Watban after his recovery of the Amirate and subsequent voluntary exile, was succeeded in the barony of Dar'İya, not by the latter's son Markhan (who however appears to have remained at the capital) but by the former's brother Muhammad ibn Miqrin: the father of Sa'ud, and thus the first regnant member of the family in the direct line back from the present king. Succeeding to the chiefship in or about the year 1654, exactly three centuries back, he was apparently followed by Nasir, presumably his eldest son and brother of Sa'ud, who was certainly known as the Amir of Dar'İya in 1673, when he and his cousin, Ahmad ibn Watban, were assassinated in the normal course of the blood feud initiated by the latter's father, possibly with the assistance of Muhammad ibn Miqrin. There is reason to believe that the murderer in this case was Markhan ibn Watban, who now appears to have usurped the baronial honours: only to be assassinated in his turn in 1690 by his brother Ibrahim, who may have reigned in his stead until 1694, when he was murdered by one Yahya ibn Salama, of whose provenance nothing is known unless he was a son of the Dhafir chief, Salama ibn Suwait.

At this stage the rather complicated story of the barons of

Dar'iya is further complicated by the fact that Muhammad ibn Miqrin, who had assumed the reins of government about 1654, did not in fact die till this same year of 1694. We can only assume that he abdicated (or was deposed) in favour of his son Nasir at some time before 1673, and lived through the resulting vicissitudes of a quarter-century as a private citizen: or it may be that he remained the titular Amir throughout this period of forty years, while other members of the family wielded, and fought each other for, the executive power. It is at least of interest to note that his son Sa'ud must at this time have been a man of nearly thirty summers, as his first appearance on the stage of Arabian history occurred in 1685, when he accompanied 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār, the most famous of the 'Ayaina princes, on an expedition against the town of Huraimila, and took part in the battle known in the annals of Najd as 'the Day of the First Ambush', in which the defenders lost some thirty men killed. He could scarcely have been less than twenty then, and it would seem reasonable to ascribe his birth to the year 1665: the first year of a disastrous period of drought and famine in Arabia.

Going back about a century from the point which we have now reached, we find the Turks already established in occupation of Baghdad at the beginning of the seventeenth century. But in 1622 they had to face a challenge from the Shah of Persia, 'Abbas I, who marched on the city with a large army. Bakr Pasha, the Turkish governor, had at this time incurred the displeasure of the Sultan; but he was strong enough to defy the Sublime Porte's order of dismissal, and Ahmad Hafidh Pasha, who was sent to succeed him, deemed it wiser to retire from the neighbourhood. Shah 'Abbas however had little difficulty in inducing Bakr to open his gates to him by offering to confirm him in his office under Persian protection. Bakr himself was the first victim of the licentious soldiery of the Shah, who proceeded to loot and pillage the city without mercy: killing all the Sunnis who fell into their hands, especially the 'Ulama, destroying mosques and burning libraries. A Persian governor was duly installed; and all the efforts of the Turks to restore the situation were fruitless until in 1638 Baghdad was recaptured by the armies of Sultan Murad.

As has already been noted, the Arabian province of al Ahsa had by this time been in Turkish occupation for nearly half a century; and some thirty years later (1667) the Ottoman ring

round the fringe of Arabia was drawn tighter by the occupation of Basra by Mustafa Pasha on behalf of Sultan Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Ahmad. But the Hijaz, in spite of the Sultan-Calif's nominal guardianship of the holy places, had not yet attracted the military or political attention of Constantinople. Sharif Zaid ibn Muhsin had died in 1665 after a reign of nearly forty years; and the Amirate was assumed by his son Sa'd after a struggle with Sharif Hamud ibn 'Abdullah. The latter had apparently been specially selected and trained by Zaid for succession to himself, being his father's first cousin and evidently a man of parts, as Zaid not only gave him his daughter in marriage but entrusted him with wide administrative powers, which left little doubt in people's minds that he was cast for the chief rôle in due course. Hamud however seems to have been lacking in personal ambition, and after the initial clash he accepted Sa'd's claim with a good grace.

In 1669 Sharif Hamud was entrusted with the command of an important expedition into Najd, where he dealt faithfully with various tribes, including 'Anaza and Mutair, Bani Husain (Harb ?) and the Hutaim clients of al 'Awazim, the last in Kuwait territory. His main objective however was the Dhafir of the 'Iraq marches, who had stolen a large number of valuable camels from the Samda Badawin, a more or less independent branch of the Dhafir. These had linked up with Hamud's army, which had later been joined by Salama ibn Suwait, the chief Shaikh of the Dhafir. When the offenders refused to make restitution in accordance with Badawin practice, Salama had urged Hamud to seize and imprison them; but the latter had rejected his advice, and Salama had retired to his tribe in dudgeon to prepare for battle. In this the equivocal behaviour of the Samda, on whose behalf it was after all being fought, exposed the 'Adwan and other elements of Hamud's force to the full brunt of the Dhafir attack, during which Hamud's brother and two nephews were killed. The tribesmen had the better of the battle, but some time later Sharif Ghalib ibn Zamil inflicted heavy losses on them in a counter-attack; and the state of hostilities continued until Sharif Ahmad ibn Zaid arranged terms of peace and reconciliation.

A few years later we find another Sharif, Barakat by name, in command of an expedition against the Harb tribe under their chief Ahmad ibn Rahma ibn Mudhaiyan, who was apparently

killed together with other leading men in spite of the trenches dug by them to impede the Sharif's cavalry. The trenches availed them nothing, we are told, except to provide them with ready-made graves; and their land was ravaged and despoiled. And yet another famous Sharif, 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Rahman al Mahjub, is mentioned as having died in the following year (1674), which also witnessed the death of Sharif Hamud, the hero of the Dhafir battle recorded above, and Sharif Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al-Harith, a notable philosopher who had the reputation of having been consulted in all matters by the regnant Sharifs of his time, while he is also said to have been appointed Amir of Mecca by one Hasan Pasha during the trouble between Sa'd and Hamud on the death of Zaid. The rivals however settled their own quarrel in favour of Sa'd in order to get rid of one who was regarded as the nominee of the Turks: this being apparently the first mention we have of their intrusion into the Hijaz. Hasan Pasha may have been Wali of the province, but was more probably no more than the commander of a Turkish military expedition. To add to the complications of the situation among the Sharifs of the Hijaz, we are told in a note referring to the year 1667 that the Waliship of Mecca was then in the hands of the Al Yazid family, which was presumably identical with the Abu-Nami dynasty, as Sa'd was the regnant Sharif at that time, while Ahmad al Hurath was in his service as 'Sharif of Najd'.

This is our first definite indication of the claim of the Sharifs of Mecca to exercise jurisdiction over their desert hinterland, though the many incidents recorded in connection with their incursions into Najd are sufficient evidence of their views on the subject. In 1676 Sharif Muhammad al Hurath invaded Najd to attack the Fudhul tribe, whose chief was killed; and in the same year a Sharif, referred to as al-Harith, fought a great battle against the Dhafir at Dhulfa'a in the Qasim, near al Bukairiya, the scene of a famous battle between Arabs and Turks in 1904. The Dhafir were duly crushed, and agreed to pay annual tribute to Mecca as the price of peace. It is not improbable that the Ahmad al Hurath (which is the plural of Harith) above mentioned was identical with Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn al Harith, and that Muhammad al Hurath was his father. This same Ahmad al Harith is specifically mentioned as Sharif of Mecca in 1680, when he was visited on the occasion of the pil-

grimage at the end of January by various notables from Najd, including Muhammad ibn Rabi'a ibn Watban from Dar'İya. Incidentally in the same year, though we are not told in which month, there was another great flood in Mecca: the Haram being invaded by swirling waters, which reached up to the lock of the Ka'ba door (at least ten feet above ground level), and destroyed many houses and much property in the city, to say nothing of the drowning of about a hundred persons. This flood was actually witnessed by the Hijazi historian, al 'Usama, whose full name was 'Abdul-Malik ibn Husain al Makki al Shafi'i al 'Usama, and who died in December 1696.

We must assume that Sa'd ibn Zaid retained the Amirate from his accession in 1665 until some time before 1680, when the above-mentioned Ahmad al Harith is on record as holding the post: while in 1684 or the following year Ahmad ibn Zaid seems to have been Amir of Mecca, whence he proceeded to attack 'Anaiza in the Qasim, and make himself notorious by reason of the atrocities he perpetrated against its inhabitants. He could not have held the post for long, and appears to have been deposed and succeeded by Sharif Ahmad ibn Ghalib ibn Zamil of a rival dynasty. The latter however soon went into voluntary exile in the Yaman on his deposition by a member of the Abu-Nami family, Sharif Muhsin ibn Husain ibn Zaid ibn Muhsin, who assumed the reins of government, but died very shortly afterwards in 1688.

Here we have to take account of a further complication in the succession of these Sharifs of Mecca, in that, in 1691, we have a record of the *second* Amirate of Sharif Sa'id, the son of Sa'd ibn Zaid, in the lifetime of his father (!), who however ousted him from the post after a tenure of less than six months, and re-assumed the Amirate: to hold it until 1703, when he abdicated voluntarily. Sa'id's first accession to power would seem to have involved a short break in the tenure of the Amirate by Sharif Muhsin ibn Husain, who, as already noted, died in 1688.

It is evident that there was much political unrest in Mecca during the quarter century following the death of Sharif Zaid, whose son Sa'd survived him by some forty years with an interregnum of a dozen years or more separating his first from his second period of rule. Sa'd must have been well advanced in years during his second incumbency of the Amirate of Mecca; but he was hale and hearty enough to conduct an expedition

into Najd in the early months of 1694, though he does not seem to have achieved much beyond reaching the Hamada plain on the western edge of Tuwaiq. During the pilgrimage of this same year, in the month of July, however, he seems to have fallen foul of the pilgrims; and there was heavy fighting in the streets of Mecca and even in the Haram. The disorders reached such a pitch that Sharif 'Abdullah ibn Hashim, of another branch of the family, took the drastic step of deposing Sa'd and assuming the temporary governance of the city with the assistance of Sharif Ahmad ibn Ghalib, who had returned from his exile in the Yaman, and was living quietly on his estate at Rikani in Wadi Fatima. But by the end of the year Sa'd had succeeded in reoccupying Mecca, to resume his reign after banishing 'Abdullah ibn Hashim and his supporters. And in the following year he was off again on a military expedition into Najd, where he attacked and besieged the village of Ushaiqir, whose inhabitants were reduced to such straits that the Qadhi, Shaikh Ahmad ibn Muhammad al Qusaiyir, decreed a general non-observance of the fast of Ramdhan, falling that year in April, to enable the peasants to reap and garner their grain crops. Sa'd, unable to overawe the stout yeomen of al Washm, proposed a parley, insisting that the above-mentioned Shaikh Ahmad and his ecclesiastical colleague, Shaikh Hasan ibn 'Abdullah abu-Husain, should be the village negotiators. This was agreed to, but the two prelates were unceremoniously seized on their arrival at his tent, and consigned to prison.

Meanwhile, at Dar'iya in this same year, Idris ibn Watban, who appears to have succeeded to the barony after the murder of his brother Ibrahim in 1694, was himself assassinated by one Sultan ibn Hamad al-Qaisi, of unknown provenance, though presumably of the Bani Khalid family of al Ahsa who usurped the Amirate and retained it until 1708, when he too fell a victim to the assassin's knife. He was succeeded in the chiefship by his brother 'Abdullah, whose murder in March 1709 terminated the fifteen-year period of 'foreign' domination in Dar'iya, which now returned to the legitimate line in the person of Musa ibn Rabi'a ibn Watban. Exact information about the family's vicissitudes during the following decade or so now fails us: and all that is known is that on some date before 1720 the barony of Dar'iya passed from Musa, on his deposition and banishment, into the hands of Sa'ud ibn Muhammad ibn Miqrin, the epo-

nymous founder of a dynasty which, in spite of many tribulations, has maintained its hold on Arabia ever since: to reach its zenith in our own times with the long and glorious reign of 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Sa'ud. It was incidentally in 1721, during his grandfather's tenure of the barony, that there was born at Dar'İya the late king's almost equally famous namesake, the first 'Abdul-'Aziz, son of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. Sa'ud himself was not destined to see the flowering of his progeny: nor could he have been aware of the existence at the neighbouring town of 'Ayaina of a young and earnest theological student of some twenty summers, whom destiny had cast for the rôle of guide, philosopher and friend for his own son and grandson, who would one day climb on his sturdy shoulders to the pinnacles of imperial fame. Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab was born at 'Ayaina in 1703: to learn in due course that a prophet has no honour in his own country.

Sa'ud was gathered to his fathers at Dar'İya on June 12th, 1725, the night of the 'Id al Fitr feast: and was succeeded in the barony, not by his son Muhammad but by a cousin, Zaid ibn Markhan ibn Watban, the senior living representative of the senior branch of the family. This was normal practice under the system of primogeniture obtaining in Arabia; and there would seem to have been no resentment, much less opposition, at the new ruler's accession: though Sa'ud's brother Miqrin evidently thought himself entitled to the succession, which he certainly coveted, though he made formal profession of his loyalty. In due course he invited Zaid to visit him for the confirmation of their understanding; but Zaid, suspecting treachery, declined to do so unless his safety was guaranteed by Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and Miqrin ibn 'Abdullah ibn Miqrin, the nephew and first cousin respectively of Miqrin himself: a striking tribute to their reputation for integrity. The two sureties pledged their word, and the meeting took place in Miqrin's reception-room; but it soon became clear that the latter intended treachery against his guest, and without further ado the sureties flung themselves on their dishonest host, who escaped through a window and hid in a closet, where he was duly caught and killed. So Zaid remained master of the situation under the shadow of yet another of the tragedies which had accompanied the growing pains of a family destined to be great.

But Zaid did not survive this episode for long. As will be

related in due course, the city of 'Ayaina had been ravaged and decimated by a severe epidemic of cholera in the previous year: the principal victim of the scourge being its prince, 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār, who was succeeded by his grandson, Muhammad ibn Hamad, nicknamed Kharfash (the stutrer?). The desolation of 'Ayaina, hitherto the most flourishing city of Central Arabia, tempted the cupidity of Zaid, who advanced on it with a large following of Kathir and Subai' brigands. At 'Aqraba, near Jubaila, he received a polite and deprecatory message from Kharfash offering to give him what he wanted without putting him to the trouble of pillaging the impoverished peasants and Badawin of the district, and suggesting a personal meeting to discuss the matter. Zaid proceeded thither with an escort of forty men, including the trusty Muhammad ibn Sa'ud; but the servants of Kharfash, previously deployed in hiding, shot and killed Zaid the moment he had taken his seat in the reception-room. Muhammad and the rest of the band took refuge immediately in a neighbouring room, prepared to fight to the last if necessary, and refusing Kharfash's invitation to come forth unless and until their immunity from molestation in any form was guaranteed by the lady Jauhara, the famous daughter of the late prince, 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār, and thus the aunt of Kharfash. This being done, Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and his men returned to Dar'iyā, where he assumed the Amirate towards the end of 1726 or early in the following year: to reign there unchallenged till his death in 1765.

After a start so unsteady and disturbing, the Sa'udi régime soon settled down to a firm and easy stroke, to be disturbed no more by the vendetta which had taken such a toll of its earlier generations. And incidentally the last possible serious pretender to the throne had been removed by this episode at 'Ayaina, in the course of which Musa ibn Rabi'a, who had been living in exile at Ibn Mu'ammār's court since his banishment by Sa'ud, was mortally wounded by a musket shot, and died soon after.

Having now reached the point at which the story of Sa'udi Arabia begins, we must retrace our steps to bring the record of its rivals for Arabian hegemony up to date. And it will be convenient to begin with the Hijaz, where the Amirate of Mecca was held by Sharif Sa'd ibn Zaid in the opening years of the

eighteenth century. On his behalf Sharif Surur ibn Zaid, possibly his brother or nephew, had conducted an extensive raid into Najd in 1697: to deal in particular with the sturdily independent, but always turbulent, province of Sudair. Atrocities were committed at the village and oasis of al Raudha, whence Surur turned upon Jalajil, where he was able to seize the fugitive Amir of Raudha, Madhi ibn Jasir. Three of the four founder families of al Raudha were banished to Ushaiqir, but two of them returned almost in full strength only two years later. One of these, the Al abu-Rajih of which Madhi ibn Jasir was the leading personality, not only recovered its own section of the oasis but ejected the fourth family, Al abu-Hilal, from its quarter share in the oasis after a fight between the latter's representatives in the town of Dakhila and Fauzan ibn Zamil, the chief of Al Tumaiyim, who was joined by Madhi ibn Jasir. And at about the same time a group of families from Hauta of Sudair, which had previously been banished from their homes and had been living at 'Ayaina, decided that conditions in the homeland were propitious for their return. But they were rudely undeceived on their arrival at al'Auda, whose people set upon them and slew many. The history of Sudair is full of incidents of this kind; and it so happens that we have fuller information about their rather parochial details than is available in the case of any other province, as most of the historians and scholars of the Sa'udi period seem to have been natives of Sudair itself or its immediate neighbourhood.

To return to the activities of Sharif Sa'd, who was obviously interested in keeping his hinterland under control, we hear of him in 1699 seizing in Mecca and imprisoning a hundred of the principal men of the 'Anaza tribe. And in the two succeeding years there were several punitive expeditions, mainly directed against the Dhafir, but also embracing other elements, including the Bani Husain (of Harb?). In 1701 the Dhafir suffered a grave loss in the death of their famous chief, Salama ibn Murshid ibn Suwait, who has figured prominently more than once in the course of this story as the stock enemy of the Sharifs of Mecca. The following year was marked by a serious famine in the Hijaz; and at the end of the year, or early in 1703, Sharif Sa'd ibn Zaid abdicated of his own free will in favour of his son Sa'id, who thus entered upon his third term of office: only to find himself confronted by more trouble. The general unrest

and insecurity were gravely aggravated by famine conditions and soaring prices; and matters grew so serious that Sulaiman Pasha, described as the 'Pasha of Jidda' and evidently the principal representative of the Sublime Porte in the Haramain area, began to consider the advisability of unseating Sa'id in favour of Sharif 'Abdul-Karim ibn Muhammad ibn Ya'la of a collateral branch of the family. Sa'id, however, scenting a plot against him, countered by investing a nominee of his own, his nephew 'Abdul-Muhsin ibn Ahmad ibn Zaid, with the authority of the Amirate in succession to himself. But Sulaiman Pasha persisted in his plans; and 'Abdul-Muhsin retired, after only nine days in office, in favour of the Turkish nominee, 'Abdul-Karim. This was in the latter part of 1704: soon after a change in the Ottoman Sultanate itself by the deposition of Sultan Mustafa ibn Ibrahim in favour of his brother Ahmad.

On the accession of Sharif 'Abdul-Karim to the Amirate, Sharif Sa'id and his father Sa'd ibn Zaid were banished from Mecca, where famine conditions still persisted, though on a less severe scale than before. Under the new régime little interest was shown in the affairs of Najd; and it would seem that 'Abdul-Karim had plenty of trouble to occupy his attention at home. The fact that he was the nominee of the Turks scarcely militated in his favour; and by 1711 Sharif Sa'id was back again from exile with popular support sufficient to enable him to depose and banish 'Abdul-Karim: apparently with the tacit acquiescence of the Turks, as the Sultan duly issued a firman appointing Sa'id to the Amirate. The latter now entered office for the fourth time, and remained in it undisturbed until his death in 1717. He was succeeded by a Sharif Muhsin ibn 'Abdullah, who raided Najd and attacked the Bani Husain near Majma'a in the winter of 1726/7. But the Arabian desert had now been virtually free from Sharifian attentions for a quarter of a century; and this may be attributed in part at least to the growing control of the Hijaz by the Turks, who doubtless were fully occupied there in keeping order generally and in ensuring the immunity of the pilgrim routes from interference by the Badawin tribes on the way.

So much for the Hijaz at the true dawn of the Sa'udi era. If the Turks had succeeded in establishing themselves in the holy land of Islam in recognition of the Sultan-Calif's spiritual prestige and obligations: the situation was very different on the

other side of the Arabian peninsula, where their interests had never been anything but secular and imperialistic. And we have to go back a long way on the path of history to the point at which we left 'Ali Pasha in charge of the relatively recently conquered province of al Ahsa, to trace the course of events, which had completely eliminated every trace of Turkish domination in eastern Arabia, and built up a powerful native principality as a strong challenger for hegemony in Arabia in competition with 'Ayaina and Dar'iya. It was the latter, obviously the least fancied of the competitors at the time of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud's accession, which was to prove the dark horse in the race, long and arduous as it would be.

After the pilgrimage of 'Ali Pasha's son Bakr in 1634, we hear little of events in al Ahsa, and nothing to suggest that the Turkish occupation of the province would be anything but permanent. The position of the Turks had been greatly strengthened in relation to eastern Arabia by the recovery of Baghdad from Persian rule in 1638 under the auspices of Sultan Murad; and the situation had been decisively improved during the reign of Sultan Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Ahmad by the capture and occupation of Basra in 1667 by Mustafa Pasha. Yet two years later Ottoman rule in al Ahsa had come to a violent end at the hands of a local clan after a run of just under eighty years, and was not to be renewed until the lapse of over a century and a half. In the meantime we know that 'Ali Pasha had been succeeded as Wali of al Ahsa by one Muhammad Pasha, who in turn had been followed by 'Umar Pasha, the last of only four governors who had covered a span of seventy-eight years with an average tenure of nearly twenty years each.

It was in the time of the last-named that, with the support of Muhanna al Jabri, a scion of the Ajwad ibn Zamil family which the Turks had displaced in 1591, and his own cousin Muhammad ibn Husain ibn 'Uthman, Barrak ibn Ghurair, chief of the Al Humaid clan of Bani Khalid, rose against and slew Rashid ibn Mughamis Al Shabib, the Muntafiq prince, who appears to have been a puppet ruler of the province under the control or supervision of the Turkish governors. Slaying and plundering the Badawin levies of Rashid, he turned next on the Turkish garrison in the Kut castle of Hufhuf, which was taken by storm and its defenders put to the sword or driven out of the country. A similar drama, with very similar results, was to be enacted on

the same spot nearly two and a half centuries later when the late king, then only ruler of Najd, put an end to the last Turkish occupation of al Ahsa after a duration of just over forty years. In both cases the plan of attack was bold and simple, and perfectly executed by a body of determined men under skilful leadership against a foe disgruntled by long exile in the desert wastes and too weary to put up any effective resistance.

Barrak ibn Ghurair ibn 'Uthman ibn Mas'ud ibn Rabi'a of Al Humaid, to give him his full titular, chief of the Bani Khalid and now prince of al Ahsa, was not the man to rest on his laurels, and was on the warpath in the year following his triumph: striking at the Dhafir somewhere in the hilly country south-west of al Qasim, probably among the ridges of Kaithal (or Kaithan), where the Dhafir had had a battle with the Fudhul shortly before. On his way back he passed by the oasis of Sadus, and pillaged its Kathir tribesmen. Incidentally it is interesting to find at this period how far west the range of the Dhafir extended beyond its present frontier in the immediate hinterland of 'Iraq. The Fudhul also are worthy of note as an element which no longer exists in Central Arabia as an organised tribe. Their eastward migration from the centre probably began in 1674, when Najd was visited by a devastating famine, known to Badawin legend as *Jarman*. The winter of 1675/6 had seen the balance redressed by copious rains; but some of the benefit derived from them in the pastures was offset by an immense invasion of locusts during the second of these years, nicknamed *Jaradan* (locusts) because many people died from a surfeit of them.

It was at this time that Barrak again attacked the Dhafir, and had the satisfaction of capturing their chief Shaikh Salama ibn Murshid ibn Suwait: while in the following year he successfully raided some elements of the Dar'iya community. But this appears to have been his last exploit, as he died in 1682, and was succeeded by his brother Muhammad, who celebrated his accession with a raid against Yamama in Kharj. Four years later he was back in the same vicinity, attacking some sections of Subai' at Hair in Wadi Hanifa; and the same elements were the objective of a second attack by him in the summer of 1687 at Hair al Majma'a in the Sudair province. In the following year he was engaged in warfare with the Al 'Uthman chiefs of al Kharj, though nothing is on record regarding the course of the operations. We are however told that the year was one of plenty, with

excellent pastures, abundant truffles and, once more, masses of locusts. 'The locusts eat us', say the Badu, 'and we eat the locusts.' In Sudair wheat sold at 5 *Sá* the *Muhammadi* (equivalent to the *Majidi* of later Turkish times?) and dates at 20 *Wazna*, while at Dar'ıya dates sold at 1,000 *Wazna* the *Ahmar* (Turkish gold *Lira*?). Incidentally it is recorded of the following year that the three traditional pilgrim trains camped at 'Anaiza on the way to Mecca, with the result that prices of all foodstuffs rose sharply. These pilgrims came respectively from 'Iraq, Persia and al Ahsa: the 'Iraq one being raided by the Dhafir and Fudhul at Tanuma on the return journey, and suffering heavy losses of property. The southern part of 'Iraq was ravaged in 1690 by a disastrous plague, which was described as being without precedent: decimating the population of Basra, and ruining the town so completely that it remained abandoned for many years thereafter. The plague also reached Baghdad, and carried off a large proportion of its population.

Muhammad ibn Ghurair died in 1691, and his nephew Thunaian ibn Barrak was killed in the same year, apparently in some raid, as also were two other possible candidates for the chiefship, which thus devolved on Sa'dun, the son of Muhammad ibn Husain ibn 'Uthman, who had cooperated with Barrak in the ejection of the Turks. The Ottoman administration was now beginning to have trouble with the Muntafiq tribe in 'Iraq; and in 1694 Mani' ibn Shabib, the premier chief of the confederation, presumably in succession to Rashid ibn Mughamis Al Shabib, who had failed to hold al Ahsa for the Turks, made himself master of Basra and its district. Doubtless the Turks were not holding it in force at the time owing to its ruinous and unhealthy condition after the plague. Nevertheless the loss of such an important bulwark towards the east must have been distasteful to them. At any rate the Muntafiq chief did not hold it long, as in 1796 Basra was attacked and captured, possibly with Persian aid and certainly in the Persian interest, by Farajallah ibn Muttalib, the chief of the Marsh Arabs of al Huwaiza. The latter in turn was evicted from the district by the Turks in 1699, who thus recovered possession of an important strategic point.

The first year of the new century saw Sa'dun in action, with the support of the Fudhul and elements from the Hijaz, against the Dhafir in a battle at al Batra amid the sands of Nufud al

Sirr. Salama ibn Suwait, having in 1696 experienced a second period of incarceration at the hands of the Sharif of Najd for an act of aggression against the Fudhul, then raided Sudair; but Sa'dun did not leave him long in peace. And on the whole Salama had the worst of two encounters with Sa'dun and his Sharifian allies at al Sali' and again at al Batra. He himself may have been wounded in the fight, as he died on the way home, and was buried at Jubaila.

The next two or three years were years of famine and hardship among the Badawin throughout the land; and we hear little of the activities of the Bani Khalid. But in 1706 Najm ibn 'Ubaidallah, a grandson of Ghurair, spent the summer months at Thadiq; and in the same year Dujain, a son of Sa'dun, raided and despoiled Al Zari'. In this year also the 'Anaza were driven out of their summer quarters in the Sudair region by the Dhafir, who pursued and brought them to battle at al Khidhar in the Dahna sand-belt. The tents of Sharif 'Abdul-'Aziz, the 'Sharif of Najd', who was with the discomfited 'Anaza, fell into the hands of the enemy. In the early months of 1708 Sa'dun in person escorted the pilgrims of al Ahsa through his territory: camping with them at Thadiq in their passage through the Tuwaiq range by Sha'ib al 'Atk, which divides Sudair from al 'Aridh. And another grandson of Ghurair, 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Hazza', made himself notorious at this time by murdering 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Isma'il, a cousin of Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Isma'il, formerly Qadhi of Ushaiqir until his death there in 1697. We are not informed of the reason for the crime or its consequences.

In 1709 the war between Sa'dun ibn Ghurair and the Dhafir was carried into the Hajara district in the hinterland of 'Iraq without appreciable gain to either side. And the next few years were marked by heavy rains, including a very destructive hail-storm at Malham and Raghaba, with good pastures and abundant harvests, resulting in a welcome drop in the prices of all necessities of life. In 1714 Sa'dun joined with 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammam of 'Ayaina and elements from al 'Aridh in a great expedition against al Kharj. Yamama was attacked and plundered, but a counter-attack by the local chief, al Bijadi, with only four horsemen appears to have resulted in the withdrawal of the invaders! And so the years drew on without any incident of especial note, and with the usual interplay of drought and

disease with floods and good harvests (including one winter, 1714/5, of severe and damaging frost) until 1721, when Najd was invaded in force by Sa'dun, who spent the whole summer there, blockading the Kathir Badawin within the confines of al 'Aridh, and bringing up his guns for the siege and bombardment of 'Aqraba and al 'Ammariya, which were reduced to severe straits of starvation, while their fields and palms were ravaged. Sa'dun now turned on Dar'iya, plundering its rich palm-groves and destroying many houses in the villages of al Dhahra, al Suraiha and Malwi; but his army suffered fairly heavy casualties in the frequent sorties of the people to defend their property. It is interesting to reflect that it was in the midst of this turmoil that the great 'Abdul-'Aziz first saw the light of day from some latticed casement of the great castle of Turaif.

Sa'dun was again on the move towards Najd in the early months of 1723, when he died in his war-camp in the Jandaliya tract of the Dahna sands. He had led his tribe and administered his realm with distinction for more than thirty years; and it was a real misfortune for his compatriots that his firm hand should be removed from the helm just at a moment when the real struggle for Arabian leadership was about to begin. His death gave rise to immediate confusion and dissension; and the tribe divided into factions in support of one or another group of pretenders to the chief's mantle, which in fact none of the available candidates was worthy of wearing. The essential struggle was between the sons of Sa'dun himself, Dujain and Mani', on the one hand, and on the other the two sons of Sa'dun's predecessor in the chiefship, Muhammad ibn Ghurair, namely 'Ali and Sulaiman, who were of Sa'dun's own generation, being his second cousins. After some desultory brawling in arms, wiser counsels prevailed; and 'Ali ibn Muhammad became chief of Bani Khalid, while the sons of Sa'dun were kept in detention for a while as a precautionary measure. The arrangement was scarcely likely to endure long without friction; and before the year was out Dujain made an unsuccessful attempt on the life of Sulaiman, the new chief's brother, while the latter retaliated with an equally unsuccessful attack on one of Dujain's henchmen.

The great drought which had begun in 1722 lasted, with disastrous effects, until the winter of 1724/5, when the situation was relieved by good rains: in the Hijaz area for instance prices of foodstuffs rose to impossible heights, and even then

there was nothing to buy, so that the people were reduced to eating dead asses and other carrion. Unfortunately the rains which followed this long drought generated a sort of yellow blight, which did much damage to the growing crops, while a visitation of locusts and hoppers did not improve matters. A severe cholera epidemic during the winter of 1725/6 seems to have been confined to 'Ayaina and its neighbourhood, whose population was decimated, while many of the survivors fled from the scene. The death from this cause of the great prince 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār was a blow from which his principality scarcely had time to recover before it was swept into the maelstrom of Wahhabism. It was indeed a remarkable coincidence that the two great rivals of Dar'īya, al Ahsa and 'Ayaina, were both deprived of the wise guidance of their outstanding chiefs at the moment when Dar'īya itself had passed through a storm of internecine conflict to find a leader, whose reign would add a glorious page to the history of Islam, and lay the foundations of a dynasty and an empire such as has not been seen in Arabia since the passing of the kings of Sheba.

Dujain, after the failure of his attempt on Sulaiman ibn Muhammad, appears to have quitted al Ahsa for a while; but before the year (1726) was out, or early in the following year, he had secured sufficient support from the Dhafir and Muntafiq to make another bid for the throne of his father. Hufhuf was besieged for some time, while the Badawin allies of Dujain roamed the country, pillaging and killing in the outlying villages and palm-groves; but 'Ali had the better of the actual military operations, and was never in serious danger of defeat. The invaders in due course withdrew after some sort of truce had been patched up between the warring cousins; and it was 'Ali who remained arbiter of al Ahsa when Muhammad began his reign at Dar'īya. As we have seen, their contemporary in the principality of 'Ayaina was Muhammad ibn Hamad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār, nicknamed Kharfash.

It only remains to complete this prelude to the days of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud by bringing up to date the story of 'Ayaina from the point reached with the accession to its chiefship of 'Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Mu'ammār in 1661. His reign of twenty-three years seems to have been quite uneventful, and the only incident recorded of it is the outbreak of war between 'Ayaina and Huraimila in 1684, of which he only lived to see the

first stage. We have indeed no record of his death, which must however have taken place early in 1685, when another 'Abdullah, his nephew and the son of Muhammad ibn Hamad ibn 'Abdullah I, began the long and distinguished reign which ended, as already noted, in the cholera epidemic of 1726. It was in his time that 'Ayaina became the cynosure of desert Arabia owing to his efforts to develop its agricultural capacity to the utmost, and to provide housing for a population steadily increasing as the amenities of the city improved. It is a curious fact that his father Muhammad ibn Hamad was still alive at this time, as he is recorded as performing the pilgrimage in the year of his son's accession. Such situations are obviously not common anywhere, but occasion little surprise in Arabia, where we have the outstanding case of the late king's father, who lived through more than a quarter of a century of his son's reign.

His first preoccupation was inevitably the war against Huraimila, begun by his predecessor. And soon after his accession we find him proceeding, in company with Sa'ud ibn Muhammad of Dar'İya, to the battle of al Muhairis, better known to local legend as the 'First Ambush'. This has already been referred to, and it will suffice to repeat that the folk of Huraimila were worsted with substantial losses, though no attempt was made to assault the town itself. Soon afterwards an expedition from Huraimila attacked al Qarina, a few miles down the valley, and took it by storm; but in the following year they had again to face an attack by the 'Ayaina chief, who once more inveigled the defenders into an ambush, and took toll of them. This was the 'Second Ambush'. But, undeterred by their defeat and losses, the Huraimila people, this time in conjunction with Muhammad ibn Miqrin of Dar'İya and Zamil ibn 'Uthman of al Kharj, set out for Sadus, ravaged its territory and destroyed its fort. And in 1688 or 1689 the war between 'Ayaina and Huraimila was brought to an end by the negotiation of peace. 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammad was now to enjoy nearly fifteen years of undisturbed attention to the development of his own territories; and it is not until the year 1703 that we hear of him again on the warpath, when he attacked and occupied the territory of al Qarina. In the following year he turned his attention to the key position of Thadiq; but when he had reached al Bir, the 'Anaza Badawin interposed between him and his objective, and lifted many of his transport animals. 'Ayaina itself experienced heavy

floods in Wadi Hanifa, which carried away or damaged many of its buildings.

Huraimila, after twenty years of peace, once more attracted the attention of 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār in 1709, when he attacked it with a force recruited from the villages of al 'Aridh and the Subai' Badawin, but withdrew after some desultory fighting. And Huraimila, as before, reacted vigorously against some of his local allies, and took the oasis of Malham by storm. It was not until 1716 that Ibn Mu'ammār again attacked Huraimila, and ravaged the holdings of its Za'a'ib community, while he renewed the attack two years later, killing some ten persons and capturing a large number of sheep in their grazing grounds. In 1725 his son Ibrahim led an expedition to the neighbouring oasis of al 'Ammariya, where he remained for some time after forcing its surrender: while a few days later 'Abdullah himself encountered a raiding party of the Kathir Badawin at 'Usaiqa' in the same neighbourhood. Twenty of his men were killed in the ensuing battle, from which 'Abdullah withdrew in headlong flight, leaving the victorious Badawin to lay siege to Ibrahim in 'Ammariya. This was 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār's last campaign: and it must be admitted, on the evidence of his military exploits over forty years, that he can scarcely be ranked among the great soldiers of his time. The great reputation he enjoyed in his lifetime and in retrospect was built up entirely on his civil and administrative achievements, of which the 'Ayaina he left to his successor was a sufficient monument. He was carried off, as already noted, by the cholera epidemic of this same year, which may have had his son Ibrahim also as one of its victims, as the chiefship fell to a grandson, who would have to face the rising power of Dar'iya. Muhammad Kharfash was scarcely of the stature required for such a task; and, quite apart from the incident of Zaid ibn Markhan, for which Zaid himself was largely responsible, his first reaction to the responsibilities of chiefship was scarcely promising. The dismissal of his grandfather's trusted Qadhi, counsellor and friend, Shaikh 'Abdul-Wahhab ibn Sulaiman, was a blunder which could never be repaired.

Muhammad ibn Sa'ud

VERY little is known about the political and military developments of the first two decades of Muhammad's reign. They were nevertheless a period of supreme significance in the history of Arabia: a period during which the dominant factor was not the alarums and excursions of kings and captains, but the incubation of an idea, a *Logos* as it were, which was to be at once the inspiration and the war-cry of generations to come, even to the present day, when we begin to see the flesh wilting under the long strain put upon the spirit by a voice crying in the wilderness.

Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab was born at 'Ayaina in 1703: the son of 'Abdullah ibn Mu'ammār's Qadhi, whose father was a noted ecclesiastic, the Shaikh Sulaiman ibn 'Alī ibn Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Rāshid ibn Barīd ibn Mushrif ibn 'Umar ibn Ma'dhār ibn Idrīs ibn Zākhīr ibn Muhammad ibn 'Alawī ibn Wuhīb. The authenticated pedigree of the future founder of the Wahhabi movement thus goes back for sixteen generations, or roughly five centuries, and some of his forbears may well have known or heard the preaching of the famous Unitarian Ibn Taimiyya, who was the main source of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab's inspiration.

The grandfather, Shaikh Sulaiman, had died in harness as Qadhi of 'Ayaina as far back as in 1668. He inherited the ecclesiastical tastes and traditions of his family, and had imbibed the elements of theology and jurisprudence from his own grandfather Muhammad ibn Ahmad: passing them on in due course to his sons 'Abdul-Wahhab and Ibrahim. He had accompanied 'Abdullah II ibn Mu'ammār on his expedition against al-Bir in 1661, when as we have seen, he played a notable part in negotiating peace. And he must have been quite a remarkable personality, if the tale is true that he, having laboriously prepared and completed a treatise on a certain theological point (*Iqnā'*), deliberately tore it up on being told of the existence of a treatise on the same subject by Shaikh Mansur al Bahuti, who died in 1642, and was

ranked by the experts with his pupil, Shaikh Muhammad al Khaluti, among the outstanding exegesists of Hanbali doctrine. One of his most prominent pupils was Shaikh Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Sultan al Qusaiyir, who has already appeared in this story in connection with Sharif Sa'd's siege of Ushaiqir, where he was Qadhi, and who died in 1702. His brother and son, both named Muhammad, were among the victims of the cholera epidemic of 1726, which is thus known to have spread beyond the Tuwaiq range into Washm.

Of Muhammad's father, 'Abdul-Wahhab, apart from the incidental mention of his name in connection with the birth of his famous son, and the fact that he was a pupil of his father Sulaiman, we hear, curiously enough, nothing until his dismissal from the Qadhi-ship of 'Ayaina by Muhammad Kharfash on his accession to power in 1726. He can scarcely have succeeded his father in that post fifty-eight years before; and he cannot have been far short of eighty at the time of his dismissal, if he was old enough to study serious theology in his father's time: though youthful precocity has ever been a fairly normal factor in the ecclesiastical circles of Arabia, and indeed of Islam generally, and was markedly developed, as we are told, in 'Abdul-Wahhab's son.

On his dismissal, and supersession by Shaikh Ahmad ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, who was in no way related to him, he migrated to and settled down in Huraimila, where in a very ripe old age he died in 1740: having had the satisfaction during the last years of his life of guiding and encouraging the studies of his son Muhammad on the latter's return from his 'world tour'. It is said that he often had to curb the zeal of the young man, whose enthusiasm to be up and doing in the cause of God was apt to outrun his discretion in a society which was not yet ripe for conversion from the easy-going ways of the time. Islam was definitely the religion of all self-respecting people in the towns and villages of Najd; and there was pity, amounting to sympathy, rather than condemnation for the practices of the ignorant. Laxity in the observance of the prescribed rites of Islam, in sexual relationships and in other ways was ignored rather than approved by folk of decent standing. Superstitious belief in the efficacy of charms, offerings and sacrifices, and in the powers of trees, rocks and certain tombs to effect or hasten the gratification of normal

human desires, was but the measure of Samaritan ignorance in the masses, which the Pharisees could afford to despise or ignore amid the luxuries which their superior status assured to them.

But Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab was not of that way of thinking. The shame of his contemporary world cut deep into his soul; and he was well enough equipped with the native courage of his yeomen ancestors to stand against that world in a cause which was good in his eyes, transcending all other considerations: peace, comfort, popularity and the like. But action in such a cause needed wisdom and experience; and it was to acquire those assets that he decided to travel. We do not know how old he was when he set out on a journey planned on a more ambitious scale than proved possible of realisation. It was certainly before his father's dismissal from his post at 'Ayaina; and maybe that he reached Mecca, the first and traditional step in such a tour, while still in his teens, that is some time before 1723. Intellectually he was well equipped for such a round of the principal centres of learning he hoped to visit: having studied jurisprudence at his father's knee, and read deeply in exegesis and the Traditions. Having performed the pilgrimage, he proceeded on a visit to the Prophet at Madina, where he appears to have tarried a considerable time to study under Shaikh 'Abdullah ibn Ibrahim ibn Saif, a scion of one of the leading families of Majma'a, then residing and teaching in Madina. He invited the young student to inspect a gift which he was preparing for his native city, and took him into a room stacked with books. That, he said, is my present for Majma'a! He also introduced the young man to another notable prelate, Shaikh Muhammad Hayat al Sindi al Madani, whose classes also he attended.

From Madina Muhammad retraced his steps to Najd, where he may have visited his home, though we have no knowledge of such a visit, before continuing his journey to Basra, whence he planned to go to Damascus. Studying under Shaikh Muhammad al-Majmu'i, whose approbation he won by his zeal and learning, he now began to attract the attention of a wider circle than the schools. It was not long before certain citizens of Basra began to show their displeasure at his extreme views, and to subject him to much annoyance. In due course he was unceremoniously banished from the city, and came near perishing of thirst as he trudged under the midday sun towards Zubair. A kindly donkey-man rescued him from this plight by mounting him on

his ass for the rest of the way: his name, Abu Humaidan, being deservedly preserved. Muhammad's idea of proceeding to Syria had to be abandoned as he had lost his scrip, and with it all his material resources, in the troubles which had led to his eviction from Basra. He accordingly travelled to al Ahsa, where he was hospitably received by Shaikh 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Latif al Shafi'i al Ahsai; and proceeded thence to Huraimila to rejoin his father, remaining with him till his death, as already related.

By this time (1740) he had thrown caution to the winds, and come out openly as an apostle of moral and spiritual regeneration. Many people in Huraimila approved in principle the doctrine of his preaching, but few were enthusiastic about its literal application to their private and public lives. The population of the town and oasis was moreover divided into two main factions: each under its own chief, and neither acknowledging the authority of the other. Such a state of affairs tended to encourage lawlessness; and what was sauce for the goose was not necessarily sauce for the gander. The situation was made even more delicate by the presence in one of the factions of a body of slaves or freedmen, known as Al Humaiyan, presumably agricultural workers to whom in many oases of Arabia the manual labour of irrigation and cultivation was normally left. And it was in particular to their notorious excesses that Muhammad insisted on the literal application of the law. One night they surrounded his house, intent on mischief; but the neighbours intervened and drove them off.

Acting probably on the advice of his friends, he now decided to quit the ungrateful scene of his first ministry, and return to his native city of 'Ayaina, where 'Uthman ibn Hamad ibn Mu'ammār now ruled in place of his brother Muhammad Kharfash. How and when this change had taken place we do not know; but 'Uthman was certainly a great improvement on his uncouth predecessor, as Muhammad was to find. He was not only received with honour, but found the prince an apt and ready pupil for his teaching: while no greater compliment could have been paid him than the hand of the lady Jauhara, whom we have already met as surety for the good conduct of her nephew Kharfash. And it is clear that even at this early stage Muhammad had begun to have visions of victory, material as well as spiritual, for the cause to which he had irrevocably dedi-

cated his life. 'I hope', said he to 'Uthman one day, 'that, if you rise in support of the one and only God, God Almighty will advance you, and grant you the kingdom of Najd and its Arabs.' So the bargain was struck between prince and prophet; and the great enterprise was launched. The commendation of virtue and the condemnation of vice became the order of the day in 'Ayaina, where many folk joined the new movement with enthusiasm.

The testing of the new structure's strength and stability under the strain of unpopular measures was not shirked. A hireling was sent to cut down certain trees in the neighbourhood, which were the objects of veneration by the ignorant; and the deed was done discreetly without arousing any excitement among the people. There remained one tree, the most sacred of them all, which Muhammad decided to fell himself. On reaching it he found a shepherd sitting under it, who made as if to prevent his approach; but the gift of some article of Muhammad's clothing quietened his conscience, and the tree duly fell to the missionary's axe. Muhammad's reputation for sincerity and courage now grew apace, and he soon had a following of seventy disciples, including many of the greatest in the land.

Yet some of the most difficult hurdles remained to be surmounted. The domed tomb of Zaid ibn al Khattab at Jubaila, greatly venerated by the superstitious, was a tempting objective: and 'Uthman readily accorded permission for its demolition. Muhammad insisted on his accompanying him, which he did with an escort of 600 men. The folk of Jubaila sallied out to stop them, and 'Uthman deployed his force for battle, on seeing which the villagers withdrew. On approaching the shrine, 'Uthman excused himself and his men from raising their hands against it: whereupon Muhammad, borrowing a spade, demolished it himself. The simple, superstitious folk confidently expected some dreadful calamity to overwhelm the impious iconoclast during the night; but when he rose next morning, apparently in the best of health and ready for any fray, they began to doubt. And then at last came the famous case of the woman confessing to adultery. Here indeed was a searching test of the preacher's sincerity, and it was obviously staged as such by his enemies. It was a case of life and death, of a woman too; and Muhammad was not the man to send a woman to her death, unless he was convinced that that was God's will. He tried every

device, suggested by his expert knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence, to save the adulteress from the law; but again and again she repeated her confession of mortal sin, and refused to withdraw one word of it. Muhammad did not flinch from his ordeal, and passed sentence of death on the woman, and the sentence was executed there and then by stoning. Muhammad's reputation rose sky-high.

The news of this episode was naturally bruited abroad through every camp and village of the desert, causing dismay in some quarters and interested speculation in others. And when it reached al Ahsa Sulaiman ibn Ghurair, who had in the interval succeeded his brother, 'Ali, as chief of Bani Khalid and ruler of the province, lost no time in showing his alarm and anger at such happenings. He wrote to 'Uthman, protesting at the proceedings of his *protégé* and demanding his death on pain of withholding the annual allowance of victuals and cash, which he was in the habit of making to 'Ayaina and other communities of the interior. Such allowances cannot be regarded as tribute in any form, but were rather in the nature of insurance premia covering the right of the merchants of the coastal area to trade with the hinterland and their protection from molestation. In the case of 'Ayaina the allowance comprised 1,200 gold pieces (*Ahmar*) and corresponding quantities of foodstuffs and piece-goods.

The sacrifice of such earthly treasure, coupled with the knowledge that he was not in a position to resist an attack by the Bani Khalid prince, was more than 'Uthman, for all his good will towards the new movement and its initiator, could endure. His pleading with his guest merely produced the tart reply that he had nothing to fear from his enemies if only he would fear God and put his trust in Him. But after further argument and excuses 'Uthman decided to get rid of his guest in deference to the ultimatum from al Ahsa. Muhammad, given the choice of his destination, chose Dar'iya; and thitherwards he was duly sent under the escort of one Furaid and his cavaliers, himself trudging down the valley, with no more than a fan in his hand to mitigate the heat of a summer afternoon. Furaid however had secret orders to kill his charge on reaching the cave of Ya'qub, a saintly Darwish who had at some time been murdered and entombed therein; but his courage failed him on reaching the spot, and he returned to 'Ayaina with his fellows, leaving Muhammad to pursue his way alone to Dar'iya.

Arriving there in mid-afternoon, he sought the hospitality of one Muhammad ibn Suwailim al 'Uraini in the upper part of the oasis. He had much ado to calm the fears of his host with assurances of God's blessing and protection against the wrath of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. His presence became known to friends in the town, who came to visit him secretly and learn something of his doctrine. Little by little they began to consider ways and means of securing the protection of their chief for the visitor; and in the end they decided to enlist the sympathy of Mudhi, the wife of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. It was she who informed her husband of the matter, and persuaded him to realise the treasure which Providence had placed within his reach. It was accordingly arranged that the prince should proceed on foot to visit the preacher, that all might see the honour thus done to him, and be encouraged to join their chief in extending a cordial welcome to one who was already regarded as a worker of miracles. 'Welcome,' said the prince, 'welcome to a country better than your own country: you shall have all honour and support from us.' To which the Shaikh, as we may now call him, replied: 'Be you too assured of honour and power, for whoso believeth in the One God and worketh his will, he shall have the kingdom of the country and its people: for He is the divine Unity which has been proclaimed by all the prophets, from the first of them to the last of them.' Incidentally it may be of interest to name the principal prophets, listed in Ibn Bishr's preface as those who have led mankind through its various stages of development to the supreme flowering of God's grace in Islam itself: Adam and Noah, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, Joseph and Moses, Solomon and Jesus and Muhammad.

So the alliance of prince and priest was duly cemented that day of the year 1745: but Muhammad ibn Sa'ud sought assurances from the Shaikh on two points. 'I fear', he said, 'that, if I help you and we win the world, you and I, you may leave me to seek your fortune elsewhere; and secondly I am entitled by the laws of my land to certain revenues on the earnings of my subjects from agriculture and trade and the rest. You will not ask me to forgo this right.' The Shaikh replied: 'As for the first matter, give me your hand on it. And as regards the second, perchance Almighty God will conquer you conquests, and recompense you with spoils of war far more ample than your present

revenues.' Then did the prince take the Shaikh's hand in his, swearing loyalty to the religion of God and his Prophet, and promising to wage war in God's cause.

Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab now moved from the house of Muhammad ibn Suwailim to the accommodation provided for him in the city itself. The people flocked to his preaching, and many of his old supporters in 'Ayaina migrated to Dar'iya to live in the odour of sanctity. Even 'Uthman ibn Mu'ammār, seeing what had happened in the rival capital and fearing for himself, repented of his action: and rode in state with a large escort of 'Ayaina princes and notables to visit the Shaikh in his new home. To their pleas for his return and assurances of honourable treatment and loyal support the Shaikh returned answer: 'This is a matter not for me but for Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. If he wishes me to go back with you, I go; but if he wants me to stay with him, I stay. I will not leave one who has befriended me for another.' 'Uthman returned home disappointed, while the refugees who had flocked to Dar'iya had in truth little reason to congratulate themselves on the material results of their bid for salvation. Dar'iya was not the palatial metropolis which it had become in Ibn Bishr's time; and its resources were so slender that those who came to sit at the feet of the Shaikh found it necessary to hire themselves out for manual labour at night in order to gain a meagre livelihood. While the citadel of Turaif was reserved for the princes of Al Sa'ud and their retainers, the Shaikh settled down amid the palms of the valley in the suburb of al Bujairi, which became the intellectual centre of the capital; and the various markets, separate ones for the men and the women, were ranged along the fringes of the flood-channel.

Such was the physical setting of a revivalist movement, whose ripples would reach to the farthest frontiers of Arabia, and far beyond them. The Shaikh's classes were open to prince, peasant and pauper without distinction: all of them equally in need of spiritual comfort in the slough of despond, into which the Arabs had sunk through years of ignorance and neglect. The greater and the lesser sins were rampant in high quarters and low alike: prayers were neglected or perfunctorily performed, and the giving of alms had long ceased to be an operative obligation.

All this, at first in the limited circle of the capital and later on a wider scale, the Shaikh set himself to cure. Without force and without funds he could only use persuasion, while he bor-

rowed money freely on his personal bond to keep his students alive: it is said that, on the capture of Riyadh many years later, he was in debt to the amount of 40,000 *Muhammadi*, a huge sum for those days, and that all his debts were honoured out of his share of the spoils of the rival city and of the legal taxes collected by the government. And by this time, of course, the obligation of *Jihad*, or holy war, had been well and truly drilled into the minds of his pupils, many of whom may have found it the most palatable part of his teaching, as it was fully in keeping with the normal practices of the people. One fifth of all spoils of war was the perquisite of the central treasury, on which prince and preacher drew for the maintenance of themselves and the performance of their respective functions. They seem indeed, during the lifetime of the Shaikh, to have acted in complete harmony as a single entity with dual functions; and it is said that Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and his son and successor, 'Abdul-'Aziz, never undertook any enterprise or made any major decision without the Shaikh's approval and blessing. Half a century of such harmonious cooperation can surely have but few, if any, parallels: yet such, within a year or two, was the measure of the Shaikh's dominance in the affairs of a realm, of which he must at least be regarded as a co-founder. And when the growth of the State began to lay ever heavier burdens on his ageing shoulders, it was he who transferred the executive responsibility for the political and financial administration to 'Abdul-'Aziz, while the latter continued to consult him in all matters.

We can now turn to a review of the situation in Najd at the inception of the new régime in Dar'iyā in 1745. As already noted, the two principal rivals of the Wahhabi State, al Ahsa and 'Ayaina, were presided over by new rulers, who had come to power at some time during the thirties of the eighteenth century, namely Sulaiman ibn Muhammad ibn Ghurair, and 'Uthman ibn Hamad ibn Mu'ammār respectively. On the southern side of Dar'iyā the same period had witnessed the rise of a new power, which was now for some years to come to be the toughest adversary of the Wahhabi State; and we must go back a little to trace the growth of the barony of Riyadh. The story actually begins at Manfuha in 1682, when Dawwas ibn 'Abdullah ibn Sha'lan, the chief of the town, slew some visitors from Sudair, of the Jalajil family. Exact dates now fail us, but the trend of events is clear enough. When Dawwas died in 1726, he was

succeeded by Muhammad, the eldest of his six sons. Muhammad was challenged by his first cousin 'Abdullah ibn Faris, who slew him and banished all his brothers from Manfuha, where he himself usurped the chiefship. The brothers, including Dahham, took refuge in Riyadh, then under the rule of one Zaid ibn Musa, and prospered in exile. In due course Zaid was murdered by a slave named Khumaiyis, who usurped the governance of the town for three years, at the end of which he took fright at rumours of a plot to dethrone him, and fled to Manfuha, where he was duly put to death. Riyadh being now without a head, Dahham ibn Dawwas, whose sister was the widow of Zaid ibn Musa, assumed control of the city as regent for his nephew, Zaid's minor son. Once well established, he banished the boy from Riyadh, and usurped the chiefship for himself. In view of the long reign of Dawwas at Manfuha, beginning we know not when and ending only in 1726, when he was succeeded by Muhammad, we have no choice but to fit the developments above described into the period between that date and 1745, when we know that Dahham was already firmly established on the throne of Riyadh. In all probability he began to reign about 1740.

We have no record of any hostilities between Riyadh and Dar'iyā in the period preceding the arrival of the Shaikh at the latter. But early in 1746 Dahham and the citizens of Riyadh, supported by a contingent of Samda (Dhafir) Badawin, attacked Manfuha; a stiff fight, with casualties on both sides, ensued without marked advantage to either side until the arrival of a relief force from Dar'iyā under the chief's son, 'Abdullah. Caught between the besieged citizens and the relieving force, the attackers tried to cut their way through the latter, Dahham himself being twice wounded, and having his mare killed under him.

'Ali ibn Mazru', who had presumably succeeded 'Abdullah ibn Faris in the chiefship of Manfuha, now became the natural ally of Ibn Sa'ud in the long struggle to bring the doughty chief of Riyadh to his knees. Hostilities were resumed at once: Ibn Sa'ud sending a force under cover of night soon after the Manfuha incident to force an entry into the town, which incidentally was then situated somewhat to the west of the present city, on some high ground beyond the main palm-belt. The attackers succeeded in breaking into the houses of Nasir ibn Mu'ammār

and Dahham's brother, Turki, but they do not seem to have achieved much more than the houghing of a number of camels. Dahham now took the initiative in attacking 'Ammariya, whose chief was killed, while some camels were ham-strung. On hearing of this, Muhammad proceeded in haste to waylay the returning raiders, planning to ambush them in a certain side-valley. Dahham, being informed of his intentions, decided to ambush Muhammad on his way; and it so happened that he selected the same spot for laying his trap. The result was a sharp fight in which many men fell on both sides. And very soon after this followed another encounter, known as the 'battle of the grey-beards', in the immediate vicinity of Riyadh, whither Muhammad ibn Sa'ud had proceeded, in company with 'Uthman ibn Mu'ammār, who had now thrown in his lot with the Shaikh and the Dar'īya régime. On reaching its destination, the force was divided into two parts, one of which was to attack the outskirts of Riyadh, while the other would lie in ambush to deal with any sortie that might be made by the citizens to protect their property.

The main fighting took place round the low hillock of al Wusham near the town, and as usual the emergence of the party in ambush sent Dahham and his men racing for the safety of their walls. Among the killed were two old men, from whom the battle derived its name. The 'battle of the slaves' was almost an exact repetition of this episode, except that most of the killed on the Riyadh side were slaves. These engagements took place towards the end of 1746, and early in the following year Dahham carried the war into the Wahhabi territory, not forgetting to repeat the familiar tactic of the ambush. The Dar'īya folk swarmed out against the invaders, who fled pell-mell to draw them into the trap. The familiar result ensued, but this time with a serious difference, in that two of the sons of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, Faisal and Sa'ud by name, were killed in the fighting. Muhammad replied with a counter-expedition against Riyadh with contingents from Manfuha and Huraimila, which had now joined the Wahhabi confederacy, but without any help from 'Ayaina. Unfortunately for him there was a traitor in the ranks of Huraimila, who slipped away to warn Dahham of the projected assault at dawn. Not knowing this, Muhammad delivered his attack, only to find the defenders fully awake and ready. No decision could be expected in such

circumstances, and the battle of 'Dalaqa', or 'al Shirak', was drawn with honours even and many casualties on both sides.

The fight was renewed in the following year (1748), when 'Uthman ibn Mu'ammār commanded a mixed army drawn from Dar'īya and 'Ayaina, with contingents from Huraimila and Dhurma, which had now also entered the fold. Muhammad's son, 'Abdul-'Aziz, led the Dar'īya column, but came under the supreme command of 'Uthman, whose daughter he had recently married. The initial attack was delivered against the Riyadh districts of Maqran and Siyah; and the two hamlets were nearly captured when a sortie from the main city restored the balance. Both sides fought desperately, but the Muslims (i.e. the Wahhabis) were forced to retreat, leaving forty-five of their number dead on the field, of whom the majority were from the Huraimila contingent. This was the battle of 'al Bunaiya'. And again during the same year the attack was repeated in much the same strength and shape against a locality called Khuraiza in the neighbourhood of Siyah: but without appreciable result. The commander on this occasion was again 'Uthman, with 'Abdul-'Aziz serving under him; and the same combination was responsible for an expedition sent by Muhammad against Tharmida in the Washm province. The usual trap was set, and the folk of the town were routed when they came out to fight, losing no fewer than seventy men, while the rest took refuge in a grange outside the town. The latter was now empty of defenders, and 'Abdul-'Aziz pressed for its immediate occupation; but 'Uthman refused to allow it, and came under suspicion of disloyalty to the cause. His attitude was reported to Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and the Shaikh by 'Abdul-'Aziz, but they apparently took no action to bring matters to a head, as 'Uthman commanded a second minor expedition against Tharmida later in the year, and from there marched on Thadiq, where a few people were killed and some sheep taken.

Muhammad himself commanded the next expedition against Riyadh, in 1749, attacking a district known as al Habbuniya at dawn, but finding the inhabitants ready for a fight, which was limited to distant shooting and correspondingly few casualties. The early months of the year witnessed a spell of excessive cold, which did great damage to the young crops, and proved to be the prelude to one of the lean periods which punctuate the history of Arabia so frequently. And it was at the end of the year

that Sharif Mas'ud ibn Sa'id, the Amir of Mecca, detained the Najd pilgrims, presumably in quarantine, with a resultant heavy loss of life in their restricted quarters.

In 1750 suspicions aroused by the generally equivocal conduct of 'Uthman ibn Mu'ammār came to a head; and in June he was murdered at the end of the Friday prayers in the great mosque of 'Ayaina. It was alleged that he had been in treasonable correspondence with Muhammad ibn 'Afāliq of al Ahsa, and had come to an understanding with him to throw off his allegiance to the Wahhabi State and to take action detrimental to its interests. He was assassinated by a group of citizens of 'Ayaina itself, which had always regretted the departure of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab from their midst, for which 'Uthman alone was responsible and unforgiven in spite of his repentance and later adherence to the new religion. As Ibn Bishr remarks, religion is no respecter of persons; and the murder of the father-in-law of the heir to the throne of Dar'iya, whose son was then but two years old, was on the whole regarded as a commendable act.

In the same year Muhammad ibn Sa'ud led his army in person for another attack on Riyadh of the usual indeterminate nature: the conflict between his men and a sortie party from the town taking place round the Marwa well in the Butaiha channel, which gave its name to the engagement. Simultaneously with this expedition, another had gone forth to renew the attack on Tharmida under the supreme command of the new chief of 'Ayaina, Mishari ibn Ibrahim ibn Mu'ammār, the first cousin of 'Uthman, who was accompanied by 'Abdul-'Aziz in command of the Dar'iya detachment. The people of Tharmida however had warning of the proposed invasion, and were able to secure reinforcements from Uthaihiya and Marrat, their neighbours. They made the mistake of coming out into the open to fight off the Wahhabis, and the ambush gambit was played against them with some success. They were thus forced to retire on their village, while the invaders contented themselves with some pillaging before returning home with their spoils. 'Ali ibn Zamil, the chief of Uthaihiya, was killed in this fight, which is known as the 'battle of al-Watiya'. Another attempt on Riyadh at the end of this year, or the beginning of 1751, ended in a reverse for the Wahhabis, who reached the 'Auda region, south-east of the town, but were strongly challenged and driven out with some loss,

including 'Ali ibn 'Isa al Duru', a distant collateral of the Sa'uds, among the dead.

A more serious matter was the defection of Dhurma early in 1751, involving another distant collateral of a different branch of the royal family: the senior branch moreover, which had migrated from Dar'iya to Dhurma with 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Ibrahim, the latter being the great-great-great-grandfather of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. 'Abdul-Rahman's son Muhammad had been killed in some parochial trouble with his neighbours in 1684, and it was now in all probability his grandson (not son as stated by Ibn Bishr) Ibrahim who raised his hand against the Wahhabi movement: putting to death several of the most prominent supporters thereof in his town, including Rashid al 'Azzazi, a connection by marriage of the Saif branch of the family, some members of which now sought occasion of revenge. After some months they surprised him in the mosque and slew him and his two sons, Habdan and Sultan. This line of the family thus came to an end; and 'Abdul-'Aziz, apparently visiting Dhurma on his way to raid Zilfi, appointed one 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Rahman (al Muraidi?) as its new Amir.

The winter of 1751/2 saw the return of prosperity after the drought and crop failures already noted; and in the latter year the oasis of Raghaba was attacked and ravaged mercilessly by a confederate army drawn from Sudair and Munaikh, Zilfi and the Washm communities, together with the main body of Dhafir under Faisal ibn Suwait, presumably the grandson of Salama, whose death in 1701 has already been noted, though there seems to be no record of the name of his immediate successor. The same year saw the death of Shaikh Muhammad Hayat al Sindi, already mentioned as one of the teachers of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab during his sojourn in Madina. Military excursions of the Wahhabis in this year were limited to a minor raid on Dilam, the capital of Kharj, ending in an engagement in the 'Afja section of Wadi Hanifa, in which the efforts of the Dilamites to recapture their captured sheep and camels were easily parried. Another small raid on a Badawin encampment of the Duhaïman is scarcely worth mentioning.

But later in the year the Wahhabis had something more serious to think about. Huraimila, whose Qadhi was the Shaikh's own brother Sulaiman, appears to have wearied of the austere practices of the new dispensation. The people now rose against and

deposed and evicted their Amir, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Mubarak, whose uncle 'Adwan, with his son Mubarak, and his brother 'Uthman ibn 'Abdullah, together with other principal men of the town, elected to accompany him into exile at Dar'iya. Soon afterwards however they were unwise enough to return at the invitation and on the assurances of their own relatives of the Al Hamad faction in the town. But the Al Râshid faction immediately took up the challenge and set upon them to some purpose. Muhammad, the deposed Amir, was now killed together with eight others of his following, while Mubarak ibn 'Adwan saved himself by flight to Dar'iya. And thence in the following year he accompanied 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Muhammad on a punitive expedition against Huraimila, during which there was much desultory fighting and pillaging of palm-groves and crops, but no tangible progress in bringing the rebel townsmen to heel.

It was at this same time that Manfuha also decided to quit the fold and fight the Wahhabis, while an attempt by the Dhurma refugees to return home in the now changed conditions was discouraged by force in spite of the assistance of friends from Sudair and Washm and the southern provinces. The new Amir had evidently not been able to persuade the people to re-adopt the Wahhabi code. On the whole the year was one of some retrogression in Wahhabi fortunes, while troubles in the Bani Khalid domain now brought into prominence a personality who was to be a thorn in the flesh of the Wahhabi realm in the coming years. The Mahashir section of the tribe had risen against Sulaiman, who had fled for refuge to al Kharj, where he died soon after his arrival; and the chiefship had been assumed by 'Arai'ar ibn Dujain, who celebrated his assumption of office by doing to death a possible rival in Za'air ibn 'Uthman, a great-great-grandson of Ghurair. One Hamada of the Bani Khalid, whose exact antecedents are not on record, now rose against him and actually succeeded in forcing him to flight. From Huraimila, whither he had gone, however, he was encouraged to return, and this time it was Hamada who fled to the north rather than face the movement which was brewing against him. 'Arai'ar was now able to consolidate his position, while a cousin, 'Abdullah ibn Turki, nephew of the great Sa'dun, carried out a raid against the Dhafr at al Sibila near Zilfi, whom he soundly defeated and richly despoiled. 'Arai'ar himself was the son of Dujain, and thus the grandson of Sa'dun.

In spite of a relatively long respite from actual fighting, and the fact that the Wahhabi régime was running into difficulties, Dahham now began to weary of the struggle against odds, against which he had so far held his own pretty well. And at the end of 1753 or early the next year he decided to throw in his hand, and sent a messenger to Dar'iya with a princely gift of horses and fire-arms to propose a truce to the fighting, and to assure Muhammad ibn Sa'ud of his loyalty to himself and to the creed which he had so prospered. He also asked that a teacher be sent to Riyadh, and the man selected by the Shaikh for this purpose was one 'Isa ibn Qasim.

So Riyadh entered the fold, and there was peace for a time. Meanwhile Dhurma was running into more trouble with the murder of four brothers of the Siyâira branch of the descendants of Saif ibn Ibrahim by the new Amir, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah (al Muraidi?), who was a sincere Wahhabi and also a member of the 'Abdul-Rahman branch of the family, whose main line had been extinguished by their cousins of the Saif branch, when they rose against and killed the last Amir, Ibrahim, and his two sons a few years back. It appears that the Saif cousins had got rather out of hand after their exploit in disposing of the ruling Amir, and had openly expressed their opposition to the Wahhabi creed, while tyrannising over the population and showing their contempt for established authority. The matter was referred by the Amir to Dar'iya, and considered by the Shaikh and Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, with the result that the Amir received full authority to act at his discretion in the event of serious trouble or danger arising. He duly took counsel of some of the leading citizens of the town, who concurred in the action taken to stop the sedition once for all. But in November of the same year one Ghufaili, who was presumably linked in some way with the Saif faction, engaged the assistance of the Amir of Tharmida, Ibrahim ibn Sulaiman, and the folk of Marrat for an attempt to overthrow the Wahhabi régime in Dhurma. The Amir of the latter, scenting mischief, sent to Dar'iya for help, whence Muhammad ibn Sa'ud himself hastened to the rescue: arriving at Dhurma at the same time as Ghufaili's friends from Washm. The latter were routed, with a loss of about sixty men.

Muhammad now turned his attention to Huraimila, whither he despatched 'Abdul-'Aziz with a force of some 800 men in the early part of 1755. On approaching his objective at night, he

bivouacked to the east of the oasis and deployed his troops in a double ambush: he himself taking charge of the one in Sha'ib 'Uwaija, while Mubarak ibn 'Adwan with 200 men lay at al Juzai'. At dawn the main force advanced on the town, whose folk came out to fight, and the emergence of the first party in ambush in the midst of the conflict was not sufficient to turn the scale; but the second ambush, which had worked round to cut them off from the town, was more than they could withstand, and their withdrawal became a rout, as the citizens scattered among their palm-groves and by-ways to regain the protection of their walls. They lost about a hundred men in the process, but 'Abdul-'Aziz for some reason went off to Dar'iya, leaving his subordinate commanders to continue the operations. No sooner had he gone than one of these, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, the Amir of Dhurma, with thirteen men of his own, effected an entry into the town, and occupied it virtually without further opposition. 'Abdul-'Aziz immediately returned to deal with the situation: proclaiming immunity to all men of good will, with the exception of such members of the Al Râshid faction as had committed crimes against the civil law. The victorious Wahhabis were allowed to plunder the houses and palm-groves, and Mubarak ibn 'Adwan was appointed Amir in place of his murdered cousin. The recapture of Huraimila for the Wahhabi cause took place on March 14th, 1755. The Qadhi, Sulaiman ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, had fled from the place on foot at the height of the rebellion, and reached Sudair in safety.

At Riyadh Dahham soon became as weary of peace as he had been of war; and in this year he took the initiative in opening the second round of his struggle against Dar'iya. In this he had the support of Muhammad (ibn 'Abdullah?) ibn Faris, who was now Amir of Manfuha, as also of Ibrahim ibn Sulaiman, the chief of Tharmida, who had gathered round him all the malcontents of Washm, Sudair, Thadiq and Huraimila, and who was bidding fair to be one of the principal enemies of the new creed. The first objective of the confederates was the rescue of Huraimila from its subjection to the Wahhabi State; and for this purpose the forces at their disposal congregated at al Hissiyan a watering place and hamlet in the upper reaches of the Huraimila valley. Mubarak ibn 'Adwan sallied out against them with the forces immediately available, and skirmished round them until the arrival of reinforcements from Dar'iya: at sight of

which the confederates appear to have broken up in panic, some of their troops taking refuge in the granges of the hamlet, which they held for five days, during which as many as could escaped by night, while the rest were killed. The chief of Thadiq, Sari ibn Yahya, was one of those who escaped, while the casualties of the confederates in this 'battle of al Dâr (the house)' included some sixty persons killed. This was in August or September 1755.

The following year was relatively uneventful: with a minor attack on Manfuha by 'Abdul-'Aziz, and the arrival of a deputation from the village of Quai'ya in the 'Ardh uplands to visit the lord of Dar'ya and the Shaikh, to whom they pledged their loyalty. The year was one of bountiful rain and good crops and pastures, which may have accounted in part for the marked reduction in military activities. But the winter of 1756/7 saw the resumption of alarums and excursions: beginning with the battle of the 'Risha dam', which served to divert the floods of Wadi Hanifa into the palm-groves of Manfuha. This was the principal objective of 'Abdul-'Aziz, who occupied some granges in the great palm-belt, and proceeded to the destruction of the dam, a very solid construction of large stone blocks strengthened at intervals by rounded bastions. While he was engaged in this work, Dahham sallied out from Riyadh, and a sharp fight took place in which some ten Wahhabis and three of the enemy were killed.

The running was now taken up by the folk of Washm, where the capital, Shaqra, was the sole asset of the Wahhabi cause, and was said to have been the first community in Najd (presumably excluding Dar'ya and 'Ayaina) to adopt the new creed. The lesser settlements of the province were however bitter foes of the movement from the beginning; and they had now called in reinforcements from Sudair and Munaikh, with which to assault Shaqra. A sortie from the latter resulted in a conflict which on the whole went in favour of the defenders, who captured some horses and camels from the enemy. At this point 'Abdul-'Aziz came up from Dar'ya to join in the fray. The fight having been resumed, the Dar'ya folk emerged from their usual ambush with decisive effect; and the confederates drew back on al Qaraïn, a few miles from the capital, having lost about seventeen men, including some notables of Sudair. Having disposed of the danger to Shaqra, 'Abdul-'Aziz was return-

ing home when he was set upon by a raiding party of Subai' Badawin at the wells of al Hassi in the Haisiya pass leading up into the Tuwaiq plateau. The Badawin were worsted, and their leader, Ibn Fa'iz al Mulaihi, was captured: he ransomed himself at the price of 500 gold pieces.

'Abdul-'Aziz now attacked Riyadh: laying an ambush under cover of night outside the western gate, which gave its name (Bab al Qibli) to the ensuing fight. This was much the same as its predecessors, and the folk of Riyadh suffered some losses in the ambush. Meanwhile Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, the Amir of Dhurma, was proceeding to attack Washm, when he was set upon and put to flight by a raiding party of Samda (Dhafir). 'Abdul-'Aziz however followed up with an advance on Washm, and attacked the village of Ushaiqir: whence he proceeded to Thadiq, which he besieged for some days, cutting down many palms and ravaging the outlying territory. After some casualties on both sides, including Muhammad ibn Dughaiθir among the Wahhabis, the people sued for peace, declaring their readiness to accept the new creed and the authority of Ibn Sa'ud. One Dukhaiyil ibn 'Abdullah ibn Suwailim, a cousin of the first host of the Shaikh in Dar'iya, was now appointed Amir of Thadiq, while another member of the same family, Hamad ibn Suwailim, became Qadhi.

'Abdul-'Aziz now visited Sudair to attack the important town of Jalajil, where the familiar fighting centred round the tract of al 'Umairi, north of the town. He then proceeded to Raudha, where he summoned the Qadhis of that town and also of Hauta and Dakhila, and invited them to accompany him to Dar'iya: presumably to report to the Shaikh on the spiritual and material state of their charges. Visiting al 'Auda on the way back, he took two of its principal men, 'Uthman ibn Sa'dun and Mansur ibn Hammad, along with him as hostages for the safety of the then Amir, 'Abdullah ibn Sultan. After a short sojourn at Dar'iya, however, these two were allowed to return home on giving assurances of good behaviour; but no sooner did they arrive back at al 'Auda than they proceeded to murder the Amir and two other principal persons. 'Uthman ibn Sa'dun usurped the Amirate, and lost no time in proclaiming his rejection of the Wahhabi creed. Nevertheless he seems to have made good his authority in the town, which he ruled for the next ten years until his assassination. Meanwhile at Raudha, which with Jalajil

ranked as the premier town of Sudair, the ruling Amir, Fauzan (ibn Jasir?) ibn Madhi, who had succeeded his uncle Muhammad on his murder in 1745, was deposed and banished: to be succeeded by his brother 'Umair ibn Jasir.

The winter season of 1757/8 saw 'Abdul-'Aziz on the war-path again, with Tharmida as his immediate objective. Laying the usual ambush overnight in Wadi Jamal, he gained admittance to the neighbouring palm-grove by making a hole in the wall, and there his main assault force settled down to await the dawn. A night-watchman in the town, hearing unusual sounds, ran to inform the Amir, Ibrahim ibn Sulaiman, who soon sized up the situation and had his plans ready accordingly for the morning. Dividing his force into two parts, he sent one to watch the exit from the palm-grove, while the other sallied out to attack the troops within it. He himself and his son 'Abdul-Muhsin perished in the ensuing fight, which seems to have been desperately contested, and in which it was the Wahhabis who suffered the heavier losses, some thirty men as against eight of the defenders. 'Abdul-'Aziz next proceeded to the Sudair province, where the towns of Hauta and Janubiya admitted him without opposition.

His next objective was Riyadh, which he attacked during the Ramdhan fast, falling in May 1758. The battle took place in a locality of the oasis called Umm al 'Asafir, and among the casualties was Turki ibn Dawwas, the brother of Dahham, and other principal persons of Riyadh. This was followed by the second battle of 'al-Bunaiya', while on his way home from it 'Abdul-'Aziz gave orders for the building of the fort of al-Ghazwana in the valley of Wadi Hanifa west of Riyadh, as a jumping-off place for pin-pricking expeditions against the town and its outskirts. The construction of the building was completed in only seven days; but Muhammad ibn Sa'ud was not destined to encompass the fall of Dahham in the seven years of life which yet remained to him.

For some time now trouble had been brewing again at Huraimila, where the new Amir Mubarak ibn 'Adwan had begun giving himself airs, and showing little consideration for the Wahhabi elements in the population, whose complaints created apprehension at Dar'iya that the district might again break away from the new dispensation. Mubarak had accompanied 'Abdul-'Aziz on his expedition against Riyadh; and on its return to the

capital the Shaikh and Muhammad had suggested that for the time being he should remain as their guest at Dar'iya, without prejudice to his property rights in Huraimila, while his place as Amir there should be taken by his cousin Hamad ibn Nasir ibn 'Adwan. Having no choice but to obey what was virtually an order, he made a show of accepting the invitation willingly; and no objection was raised to his request to be allowed to visit his sister at 'Ayaina, the wife of one Hamad al Tawil. Breaking his parole however he made his way back to Huraimila, where he proclaimed his reassumption of the Amirate by beat of drum in the market-place, and was soon joined by his former adherents. The main fort of the town was however closed against him by Hasan ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Idan, the officer in charge of the local garrison, on behalf of the new Amir; and, fearing action by 'Abdul-'Aziz to restore order, he and his principal followers fled to Raghaba. One of the latter was seized and executed by the local Amir, 'Ali al Juraisi; but Mubarak himself made his way, *via* the village of al Safra, to al Majma'a, whose governor Hamad ibn 'Uthman and the Mudlij chiefs of Harma agreed to support him. Ibrahim al Sulaiman of Tharmida, and all the villages of al Washm except Shaqra, readily joined the rebels. The Raghaba incident evidently preceded the attack on Tharmida, which probably took place in June 1758. The combined forces of the confederates repaired to the watering of al Fuqair near Raghaba to watch developments and prepare their own plan of campaign. But the news of the arrival of 'Abdul-'Aziz, with a strong force, at Huraimila cooled their ardour; and they turned on the main section of Raghaba, known as al Jau, where they held 'Ali al Juraisi besieged in the main fort, killed one of the 'Urainat chiefs, Radhi ibn Muhanna ibn 'Ubaika, and cut down a number of palms. The majority of the population was however in the other section, al Hazm, and they had stood by without any attempt to come to the help of their besieged Amir. The besiegers however withdrew on hearing that 'Abdul-'Aziz was on the march, and scattered to their homes: leaving their friends in al Hazm to feel the heavy hand of the Wahhabi commander, who destroyed the dwellings of the people and gave their palm-groves to al Juraisi, as a reward for his loyalty.

The autumn of 1758 and the ensuing winter witnessed a serious challenge to the Wahhabi State under the auspices of the chief of al Ahsa, 'Arai'ar ibn Dujain, and his Bani Khalid tribesmen.

They found ready allies in many districts of Najd, notably in al Washm and Riyadh, but also elements from Sudair and al Kharj and elsewhere. 'Arai'ar, with this formidable army, took up his position at al Jubaila in Wadi Hanifa; but there was little gained by either side in the course of the active skirmishing which ensued, and the invaders withdrew. The people of Thadiq and al Mahmal, who had joined the enemy, hastened to make their peace with Dar'iya, agreeing to pay an indemnity for their disloyalty, and renewing their homage to the Wahhabi State. A Dar'iya man, Sari ibn Yahya ibn 'Abdullah ibn Suwailim, was accordingly sent to assume the governorship of the district and to ensure loyal obedience to the central authority. 'Abdul-'Aziz then attacked the near-by village of al Qasab, reducing it to submission, and imposing on its folk a ransom of 300 gold pieces. And in the autumn of 1759 he proceeded to al Kharj to punish it for its part in the movement; attacking Dilam and Na'jan, where the people suffered some casualties and the loss of much looted property. On returning home 'Abdul-'Aziz was soon on the warpath again: this time against Tharmida, with similar results; and later against Ushaiqir, where the tactic of the ambush was repeated with considerable success. Another visit to al Kharj, with further attacks on Dilam and Na'jan, whence a large number of camels were carried off and other losses inflicted in the course of the familiar skirmishing, brought the season's campaign to a satisfactory end.

It was now the turn of 'Ayaina to feel the strong arm of the Wahhabis. The Shaikh and Muhammad having decided to depose Mishari ibn Mu'ammār from the Amirate, and to replace him by Sultan ibn Muhsin al Mu'ammari, the Shaikh proceeded to 'Ayaina in person to superintend the destruction of the family castle. This act was presumably intended to symbolise the incorporation of the 'Ayaina barony in the Wahhabi realm; and the name and style of the new Amir certainly suggest that he was not an actual member of the Mu'ammār family: perhaps a prominent retainer, or even a slave. Meanwhile 'Abdul-'Aziz was active as usual with his military excursions: attacking Manfuha and setting fire to its crops; raiding the Al 'Askar section of the Dhafir at Tharmaniya near Raghaba, and lifting their cattle; and invading al Washm, where he fell in with a small party of Tharmida warriors, who fled before his superior numbers to take refuge in the hamlet of al Huraiyiq near al Qasab. 'Abdul-'Aziz,

coming up on their tracks, demanded their surrender; but the doughty villagers refused to hand over their guests, whom however they agreed to ransom from the wrath of the Wahhabi for the large sum of 1,500 gold pieces.

The campaigning season of 1760/1 again found 'Abdul-'Aziz raiding in various directions: first an excursion into Sudair, where he fell in with a party of men from al Raudha for a short but sharp tussle, without appreciable political result; and soon afterwards an attack on Riyadh, in which Fahd, one of the sons of Dawwas, was mortally wounded. This was followed by a raid against Manfuha, and that in turn by another against the Bada-win of a Subai' section on the watering of Hafar al 'Atk, from whom he captured some 8,000 camels and much other property. Another attack on Riyadh completed the season's activities with a rather heavier casualty list on both sides, but little other result.

It was in this year (1761) that the former governor of Huraimila, Mubarak ibn 'Adwan, fell a victim to a paralytic affection. And the autumn saw the resumption of the usual military activities by 'Abdul-'Aziz, who led off with another attack on Manfuha. He then attacked Na'jan in al Kharj, where some palms were duly cut down, and a few casualties inflicted on the defenders; and almost immediately afterwards he descended on al Washm, attacking Marrat and al Fara'a in turn, with the result that the latter village decided to throw in its lot with the Wahhabi cause. A deputation was accordingly sent to the Shaikh and Muhammad, under the local Amir, Mansur ibn Hamad ibn Ibrahim ibn Husain, to do homage and swear eternal loyalty: in practical proof of which war was declared on the neighbouring village of Ushaiqir, and actively prosecuted for seven years, until Mansur captured the defence towers on the southern extremity of the oasis, abutting on the upper end of al Fara'a. So Ushaiqir made its submission to the Wahhabi State after a gallant struggle of some twenty years in all.

'Abdul-'Aziz now resumed his offensive against Riyadh, killing some of the night-watchmen of the Maqran suburb, and wounding another grandson of Dahham, Sha'lan ibn Dawwas. He then turned on al Washm, attacking Ushaiqir in support of the Fara'a folk, who in concert with the always faithful Shaqra population had now built a large fort, called al Hulaila, to cover themselves and threaten the enemy. The rains and floods of this season (1761/2) had been exceptionally good, and the

country was generally in excellent condition; but a disease known as *Damgha* (apparently some sort of fever affecting the brain, and possibly that known in later times as oasis fever) was widespread in the country, and carried off considerable numbers, including some important personalities in the ecclesiastical sphere. A great invasion of hoppers added to the distress of the people, who lost a large proportion of their growing crops.

Two excursions to Riyadh opened the campaigning season of 1762/3 with no better results than their predecessors: after which 'Abdul-'Aziz turned his attention to al Ahsa, where he camped in the neighbourhood of al Mutairifi for a series of thrusts in various directions, resulting in the capture of much booty, and costing the enemy the relatively large number of seventy fatal casualties. After a fruitless attack on the town of Mubarraz he was on his way home when he fell in with a large caravan in the 'Arma district, bringing supplies from the coast for the people of Riyadh and Harma. The property of the Riyadh merchants he appropriated, but the folk of Harma, protected by their truce with Dar'iya, were allowed to proceed with their goods intact.

The Washm village of Uthaithiya now threw off its allegiance to the Wahhabi State, and attacked its adherents in the province; but apparently 'Abdul-'Aziz was at the time engaged on a raid against the Subai' in the neighbourhood of Saih al Dubul, and no immediate action was taken to bring the rebels of Uthaithiya into line. Perhaps the attention of the Dar'iya authorities was diverted from this relatively minor matter by an occurrence of outstanding significance nearer home. This was the second surrender of the formidable lord of Riyadh, Dahham ibn Dawwas, who had apparently grown tired again of the long fight, and now sent a deputation to the Shaikh and Muhammad ibn Sa'ud with a cash indemnity of 2,000 gold pieces and a request for admission into the Wahhabi fold, whose leaders he promised to honour and obey thenceforth. The Najdi historian scarcely pauses in his stride to record this astonishing development, on which he makes no comment whatsoever. He seems indeed to have been more interested in the result of one of the other hardy perennials of Wahhabi warfare: an expedition by 'Abdul-'Aziz against Jalajil, one of the premier towns of Sudair. After the customary skirmishing, with its minor casualties and the cutting down of many palms, the Jalajil chief Suwaiyid decided to make his submission to the new order; and

his example was followed by all the other towns and villages of Sudair. Passing by Raghaba on the way home, 'Abdul-'Aziz had news of an 'Ajman raiding party, which had beaten up a small gathering of Subai' Badawin in the desert west of the Tuwaiq range. Following their tracks he came up with them in the plain of Hadba Qidhla, between the 'Ardh hills and the Nufud al Sirr, killing about seventy of them as they scattered before his attack, and taking some hundred prisoners as well as forty of their mares.

The winter season of 1764/5 was another busy one for the tireless 'Abdul-'Aziz, beginning with a raid against the Su'aiyid section of the Dhafir and its chief Hammad al Mudaihim, on which he was accompanied by a contingent from Riyadh under Dawwas, the son of Dahham. The Badawin were attacked at Jarab, and thoroughly routed, losing thirty men killed and all their possessions. But in October 1764 he had to reckon with a more serious development, resulting directly from his defeat of the 'Ajman at Hadba Qidhla in the previous spring. The survivors of that battle had fled to distant Najran, whose truculent tribes were easily persuaded to join them in a counter-attack on the Wahhabis for the rescue of their imprisoned fellow-tribesmen.

The lord of Najran at that time was the Makrami chief, Hasan ibn Hibbat-allah, whose jurisdiction embraced the Wa'ila and Yam tribes, from whom an imposing array of warriors was recruited for an advance against Dar'iya. Reaching the village and oasis of Hair al Subai' in Wadi Hanifa, they were settling down to besiege the villagers when news arrived of 'Abdul-'Aziz on the march with a large force of Wahhabis. The Najranis immediately deployed to meet the enemy, and the desperate battle which ensued resulted in the complete discomfiture of 'Abdul-'Aziz and his troops, who fled incontinently: suffering heavy casualties, including about 500 killed and many prisoners. It is said that Dar'iya alone had to mourn the loss of seventy-seven of its citizens, while Manfuha and Riyadh contributed seventy and fifty men respectively to the list of dead. Other contingents which suffered were those of 'Arqa (23), 'Ayaina (28), Huraimila (16), Dhurma (four) and Thadiq (one): the rest of the casualties being distributed among the Badawin levies. The total of prisoners was put at 220.

When 'Abdul-'Aziz and the survivors of the Dar'iya contingent appeared before Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab

to report this disaster, he contented himself with a quotation from the Quran: 'Rejoice not nor mourn, for ye shall overcome if ye be faithful. . . .' Nevertheless this triumphant challenge to the Wahhabi cause, coming as it did from the despised and detested schisms of Najran and al Ahsa, must have been a bitter blow to the founder of Wahhabism; and the shadow of the tragedy must have darkened the last days of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, who was now near the end of his long and honourable career. Their immediate reaction to the dangerous situation which had developed was perhaps rather surprising. Instead of girding up their loins to avenge the humiliating defeat, they decided to negotiate a settlement with the victor, who had indeed reached the neighbourhood of Riyadh in his advance on the capital. The Shaikh sent for the Dhafir chief, Faisal ibn Suhail, to act as mediator; and the negotiations, which took place in the magnificent palm-grove of al Mahatta, where Hasan ibn Hibbat-allah had set up his tents, soon resulted in a settlement on the basis of an exchange of all prisoners and, presumably, the payment of an indemnity. The Najran chief immediately struck camp, and returned home: apparently forgetful of 'Arai'ar, the Bani Khalid prince, with whom it had been arranged that the two armies should join in a concerted attack on the Wahhabi capital.

In any case the war was over long before 'Arai'ar was ready to take part in it; and his decision now to pursue the matter without his southern ally was scarcely likely to be profitable. He did however arrive with a large army in the neighbourhood of Dar'iya, on which he used his guns and mortars in the intervals of skirmishing among the palm-groves during a fruitless sojourn of about three weeks: after which he departed for al Ahsa, leaving behind some forty of his dead, while the total Dar'iya casualties were about a dozen.

And so ended the last war of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, who was gathered to his fathers in the cemetery of Dar'iya, full of years and honour, during the summer of 1765. He was better known to his people for his piety and his humanity than for any military prowess. In fact his own last experience of campaigning had been his attack on Riyadh in 1750, since when he had left the leadership of his armies, first to the 'Ayaina princes, 'Uthman and Mishari, and later exclusively to his son and heir, 'Abdul-'Aziz. Twice he had had the satisfaction of receiving the

surrender of his most inveterate enemy, Dahham of Riyadh; and he died in the comfortable knowledge that the greatest single trouble of his life had been settled for ever, for it was not till after his death that Dahham was once more, and for the last time, to throw off the yoke of Dar'iya. The Najran affair had been the most serious blow he had suffered in his lifetime, and the ageing monarch may well have felt anxious about the future of his realm, though the subsequent defeat of the Bani Khalid invasion may have somewhat reassured him regarding the military strength of his cause. It was indeed to him that that cause owed its being; and it was to it that he and his successors owed their title to fame. It may be said with complete truth that but for him Wahhabism would never have had its day. It was he who provided the stage for a renaissance of Islam.

'Abdul-'Aziz I ibn Sa'ud

THE new Imam of Dar'iyā was no stranger to administrative and military responsibility, when the full burden of government fell upon him on the death of his father. He had made his *début* as a soldier in two expeditions against Dahham ibn Dawwas of Riyadh under the supreme command of his father-in-law the Amir of 'Ayaina, 'Uthman ibn Hamad ibn Mu'ammar, in 1748: the year of the birth of his eldest son, and eventual successor, Sa'ud. His brother, 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad, had already, in 1746, led a force to the relief of Manfuha, which had been attacked and was being hard pressed by Dahham, who withdrew after being twice wounded himself and having his mare killed under him; this being the first encounter between Dar'iyā and Riyadh since the inception of the Wahhabi régime in the previous year, and the beginning of a long-drawn-out war between the rival city-States, which was by no means at an end when 'Abdul-'Aziz ascended the throne of Dar'iyā in 1765. Incidentally, as already noted, there had arisen some coolness between him and his father-in-law during a third expedition in 1748 against the town of Tharmida, the attack on which was called off, in spite of 'Abdul-'Aziz's protests, in circumstances suggesting collusion or lukewarmness in the cause which 'Uthman had adopted of his own free will two years before. The suspicions thus aroused had come to a head in 1850, when 'Uthman was assassinated in the mosque of 'Ayaina after the Friday prayers by his own trusted lieutenants.

Ever since those days 'Abdul-'Aziz had been constantly engaged in military activities in one direction or another, though most frequently against the ruler of Riyadh; and it was not long before the ageing Muhammad left the leadership of the Wahhabi army entirely to him. More than once Dahham, hard pressed by the Wahhabi attacks, had sued for peace; and more than once he had infringed the conditions of the truces obtained by nominal acceptance of the Wahhabi régime. And it was appropriate enough that he should now have chosen the year of

'Abdul-'Aziz's accession to the throne to throw off the yoke of Dar'iya once more, and resume the struggle with an attack on Manfuha in association with Zaid ibn Zamil, the ruler of Dilam and Kharj. 'Abdul-'Aziz now attacked Riyadh, and gained a footing in some of its turrets before being forced back by a strong counter-attack. Dahham's allies of the Subai' tribe were then raided by 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad with some success, while 'Abdul-'Aziz sent a second expedition to maintain pressure on Riyadh, though it also was driven off without difficulty.

So the quarrel dragged on, with pin-pricking expeditions at intervals, and occasionally varied by excursions from Dar'iya against the Badawin allies of Dahham in the 'Arma desert or in the oasis of Ha'ir al Subai', downstream of Manfuha in Wadi Hanifa. In the spring of 1771 the Subai' were attacked in force and besieged in the village of Ha'ir, until they surrendered and swore loyalty to the chief of Dar'iya. This arrangement was scarcely likely to endure in the political setting of the time; but matters came to a head in the autumn of the same year, when, after one brief excursion against Riyadh, 'Abdul-'Aziz had reached the village of 'Arqa on his way to make a second attack, when his scouts reported the approach of Dahham with a large force of cavalry and camelry to attack the village. On sighting the Dar'iya force, however, Dahham beat in retreat, with 'Abdul-'Aziz in hot pursuit over the desert downs. Two sons of the Riyadh chief, Dawwas and Sa'dun, were tracked down and slain, together with about a score of their followers, in the neighbourhood of the Fawwara well. This was a severe blow to the pride and confidence of Dahham; and when 'Abdul-'Aziz renewed his probing during the late spring of 1773, he had again reached 'Arqa on his second attempt, when the news was brought to him of his enemy's flight from Riyadh. He pressed his march at once, to reach the city in the afternoon and find it practically empty of its inhabitants.

Dahham ibn Dawwas had indeed fled with his women-folk and children and retainers: having made his preparations secretly under cover of darkness, and only announcing his intentions to his people when everything was ready for his departure. 'O people of Riyadh!' he said, 'here I have been all these years fighting Ibn Sa'ud; and now I am weary of fighting, and abandon it to him. Whoso would follow me, let him do so; otherwise let him remain in his place.' Most of the people fled

after him, making for al Kharj, in the midst of the summer heat, for it was now the middle of June. Many of them perished of hunger or thirst. 'Abdul-'Aziz occupied the deserted city, and had all the houses sealed for the protection of their contents from pilfering, while he sent his troops in pursuit of the fugitives, killing and robbing the stragglers. So the long fight had ended, which had lasted for some twenty-seven years, with a total estimated casualty list of about 4,000 men killed on both sides, of whom 2,300 were Dahham's followers. And for years to come it was a proverb in Najd, when anyone did something silly, to compare it with the flight of Dahham from Riyadh. One cannot help feeling that he was a man of heroic mould, as deeply determined to fight for the freedom of the Arabs, as his rivals of Dar'iya were to impose the yoke of God on their stiff-necked paganism. He fought a losing cause; but the sudden collapse of his defence was in all probability due to the loss of his two sons in the *débâcle* of the previous year. That must have preyed on the mind of an old man worn out by a lifetime of conflict.

'Abdul-'Aziz had by this time been exactly eight years on the throne of Dar'iya, which was still little more than *primus inter pares* among the numerous city-States of Arabia. Apart from his constant preoccupation with Dahham, there was little of real significance in the record of these years. Tharmida had been attacked in 1766, but the battle of al Sahn provided a victory of no permanent import. In the following year there was a series of minor raids, the most significant of which was one directed against the oasis of 'Auda in Sudair under the command of the Imam's nephew, Hidhlul ibn Faisal, whose father had been killed in operations against Dahham in 1747. He was accompanied by Sa'ud, then aged nineteen, the eldest son of 'Abdul-'Aziz, who was thus having his first experience of campaigning. With the expedition were also certain exiles from 'Auda, of a former ruling family of the village, seeking reinstatement in the chieftainship for their leader, Mansur ibn 'Abdullah ibn Hamad. The *de facto* occupant of the office was easily defeated and slain, and Mansur duly became chief of the oasis.

It was in this year that the provinces of Washm and Sudair threw in their lot with the Wahhabi régime, and took the oath of loyalty to 'Abdul-'Aziz and Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, who at this time, and indeed from the beginning of his

movement, seems to have occupied a status indistinguishable from that of co-regent. We are told specifically that 'Abdul-'Aziz, like his father, never undertook any enterprise without consulting the Shaikh. At any rate with the adhesion of these provinces, and the alliances with 'Ayaina and Manfuha, the Wahhabi State had made appreciable progress in the process of expansion, which was to carry it within the next three decades far beyond the wildest dreams of the prince and prophet who had combined to create it. For the moment the main pre-occupation of the State was to combat the effects of a severe famine, known to local history by the name of *al Sauqa*, in which the wells dried up, and the cost of living rose, while many died of hunger and sickness, and many others migrated from Najd to Basra, Zubair and Kuwait during this and the following years, after which the drought was broken by good rains, though the appearance of locusts and hoppers prevented the usual summer sowing of millet and fodder crops.

In 1768 Sa'ud had his first experience of an independent command in two expeditions: all going well with the first, which was directed against Zilfi on the flank of the important Qasim province, while the second, against the Al Murra in the southern sands, began well enough, but ended in the forced retreat of Sa'ud's force when Badawin reinforcements gathered to the help of their comrades. Some casualties were suffered, including the death of Nasir ibn 'Uthman ibn Mu'ammār, who would seem to have succeeded Sultan ibn Muhsin al Mu'ammari as chief of 'Ayaina some years earlier, though we have no record of the change.

After this set-back Sa'ud was sent to intervene in local troubles in the Qasim at the invitation of Hamud al Duraibi, the ruler of Buraida, who was at feud with the folk of 'Anaiza. The usual indeterminate battle was fought outside one of the gates of the latter, with small losses to both sides, though those of 'Anaiza included 'Abdullah ibn Hamad ibn Zamil, who appears to have been the ruler of the city at this time. In the following year however, after expeditions led by 'Abdul-'Aziz in person against Majma'a and Hilaliya (west of 'Anaiza), the people of the Qasim made their submission to the Wahhabi State. This did not prevent the continuance of local intrigues in the province, and the new Amir of Buraida, Rashid al Duraibi, was ejected from the town by the 'Alaiyan family a year later:

when 'Abdul-'Aziz was engaged on his first raid beyond the limits of Arabia proper, with the Dhafir and the Muhammara Badawin of the 'Iraq border as his objective. On the other side of Arabia too he was in correspondence with the Sharif of Mecca, Ahmad ibn Sa'id, at whose request he sent one of his leading Shaikhs, 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah ibn Husaiyin, to explain the principles of the Wahhabi dispensation to him and the leading divines of the holy city. By the time of his arrival however there had been a change in the rulership of Mecca, as Ahmad had been deposed by members of his own family in favour of his nephew, Surur ibn Musa'id. It is perhaps unnecessary to discuss the details of this remarkable conference, which appears to have resulted in a declaration by the Meccan prelates of their complete satisfaction with the visiting Shaikh's unexceptionable exposition of the Wahhabi case.

No sooner had 'Abdul-'Aziz rested from the labours of his long struggle with Dahham, than a new and potentially greater danger confronted him from the east: possibly as the result of his own gratuitous thrust towards the 'Iraq frontier. During the spring of 1774 'Arai'ar ibn Dujain, the prince of al Ahsa and chief of the Bani Khalid tribe, advanced on the Qasim to attack Buraida, which, after a short siege, he captured by storm and sacked, before withdrawing down Wadi Rima to the neighbourhood of Khabiya and Nabqiya. Here he received encouraging correspondence from various districts of Najd, which had evidently been deeply impressed by his capture of Buraida and the size of his army. And he was preparing for a campaign against Dar'iya itself and the neighbouring districts, when suddenly he fell ill and died in May, about a month after his withdrawal from Buraida.

He was succeeded by his eldest son, Butaiyin, who was however, in spite of a lavish distribution of largesse from the campaign funds, unable to keep the army together for the prosecution of his father's objective, and consequently returned to al Ahsa. Here he was before long set upon and strangled to death in his own house by his brothers, Dujain and Sa'dun. The former succeeded to the family honours, but died shortly afterwards: believed to have been poisoned by Sa'dun, who now became prince of al Ahsa and leader of his tribe.

Meanwhile Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz had been raiding: first towards al Kharj, and later against Zilfi, without any striking re-

sults, though in both directions there was evidence of the spread of the Wahhabi teaching, as the people of Hariq Na'am and those of the Majma'a district sent deputations to announce their allegiance to the new régime. But al Kharj showed no disposition to fall into line; and after a second visitation by 'Abdul-'Aziz himself early in 1775, Zaid ibn Zamil of Dilam conspired with the chief of Wadi Dawasir, Huwail of the Wudda'in, and other leaders of the southern districts, to enlist the help of the Najran tribes in staving off the aggression of Dar'iyā. To this end they collected large sums of money to disburse to the various chiefs concerned; and in due course a formidable army, comprising the settled elements of the great oasis and the Yam tribesmen, was on the march towards al 'Aridh. Joined by the Dawasir and the Kharj folk on the way, the confederates arrived at Ha'ir al Subai', where they did much damage among the palm-groves, and killed about forty of the defenders in various actions, before continuing their march to Dhurma. Here they met with determined opposition, and lost heavily in the fighting among the palm-groves, from which they were eventually dislodged: the confederates then deciding to abandon the expedition and return to their homes, while Zaid ibn Mishari ibn Zamil, left thus exposed to attack, made his peace with Dar'iyā and entered the Wahhabi fold. Sa'ud had at this time been conducting an expedition against Buraida, which was forced to surrender and accept 'Abdullah ibn Hasan of Al 'Alaiyan as their new Amir, presumably in place of Rashid al Duraibi, who had been ejected from the town shortly before, but appears to have returned and taken charge soon afterwards.

Early in 1776 the settled people of al Ahsa, led by the citizens of Hufuf, made an unsuccessful attempt to throw off the yoke of the Bani Khalid and their chief Sa'dun. On the other hand the Wahhabi cause had received an accession of strength by the adhesion of Zilfi and Munaikh (Majma'a), though the Dilam leader repented of his earlier action and slew one of the new creed's most zealous supporters. 'Abdul-'Aziz took immediate action to restore the situation, and Zaid fled: being later pardoned on making his submission, but not restored to the Amirate, which was conferred on Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan. The neighbouring township of Yamama now also made its submission to the Wahhabi cause, though its leaders were soon in correspondence with disaffected elements in Dilam to challenge the new régime. Zaid

ibn Zamil was the ring-leader of the insurrection, which forced Ibn 'Ufaisan to withdraw from Dilam with its loyalist garrison. Zaid now reassumed the Amirate, and concerted with Hasan al Bijadi, the Yamama chief, plans for a general revolt of the province, while 'Abdul-'Aziz himself was away in the south country raiding the Al Murra again. He had captured considerable numbers of camels from their pastures, when the Badawin gathered in force to drive out the invader. The Wahhabi force was pressed back into the strait of 'Aqaba Dhaiqa in the uplands of Muhairiq al Safa, where they suffered heavy losses in men and camels, including the recently appointed Amir of Buraida, 'Abdullah ibn Hasan Al 'Alaiyan.

'Abdul-'Aziz now had to deal with the Kharj trouble, and sent Sa'ud to the province for a preliminary canter to investigate the situation in the Yamama area. Here he encountered the local troops, returning from a reconnaissance or a raid, and a vigorous fight took place in the Sahba channel: both parties eventually withdrawing homeward with honours even. 'Abdul-'Aziz now sent out a call for a general muster of his levies for a serious attempt to settle the Kharj problem once for all. But, when the expedition was on the point of starting, the Amir of Harma, 'Uthman al Mudliji, protested to the Imam that his own district was much more in need of a salutary lesson than Kharj, as his people had got right out of hand and were openly flouting the principles of the faith: so that he was no longer in a position to perform his functions as governor. He pleaded for the diversion of a sufficiently strong contingent to deal at once with the Harma situation, and to bring back hostages to Dar'iya for the future good conduct of the town. 'Abdul-'Aziz acceded to his plea, and sent his brother 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad to cope with the trouble. He led his army by way of the Haisiya pass and the Hamada plain to create the impression that he was going to the Qasim. Then he doubled back up the Ghat gully to the plateau, and arrived at his objective under cover of night, to make the necessary dispositions inside and outside the town for a dawn attack.

The inhabitants meanwhile slept peacefully, until they were awoken by a single volley fired at a given moment by every man in the force who had a firearm. There was obviously no possibility of resistance, and no escape; and the people flocked to 'Abdullah to inquire the reason for his action. He assured them

that they had nothing to fear; but that their own Amir had complained to the Imam of their impious conduct and rebellious attitude, so that it was deemed advisable to pay them a visit, and invite four of their leaders to proceed to Dar'iya as hostages for the good behaviour of the rest of the population. If the four, including a brother of 'Uthman, would come along quietly, all would be well, and the expedition would depart. So everything was arranged without a single casualty, and the people took the oath of loyalty to the State once more, while the would-be disturbers of the peace accompanied 'Abdullah to Dar'iya, to remain there as guests of the Imam, while the latter resumed his operations against Kharj. These were also entrusted to 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad, who however seems to have done little more than skirmish vaguely round Dilam.

Before long sedition was again at work in Harma, whose leaders, in secret collusion with Hamad ibn 'Uthman al Tuwaijiri, the Amir of Majma'a, plotted to assassinate their own Amir, 'Uthman ibn 'Abdullah, and seize his religious friends of Majma'a, who often visited him for theological discussions, as hostages to balance their own four leaders, still at Dar'iya. The first part of the plan worked well enough; the usual visitors arrived, and were shown into the reception room, while 'Uthman, who was away in his palm-grove, was sent for. On his way home he was waylaid and slain by his brother, Khudhair, and a cousin, 'Uthman ibn Ibrahim, who then proceeded to seize his guests, put them in stocks, and lock the door of the reception-room on them. But the second part of their programme, involving the occupation of Majma'a with the privity of its Amir, went awry owing to a curious accident. When the force sent from Harma arrived in Majma'a, the guilty Amir happened to be standing outside the gate of his castle with a number of respectable (Wahhabi) citizens who, scenting trouble at the sight of the armed men advancing on them, dashed into the fort with the Amir, and bolted the door. In the circumstances the Amir could not betray himself by any response to the calls of his friends outside, while the people of the town hastily manned their strong-points, and the invaders returned home unsuccessful.

A son of the Amir was sent to Dar'iya with the news; and Sa'ud came posting up to deal with the situation. Harma surrendered after a few days of siege and some desultory fighting, and agreed to deliver up their Majma'a prisoners, while

surprisingly enough Sa'ud also promised that the Harma hostages at Dar'iya would be released. He then sent for the Amirs of Majma'a and Jalajil, who, though under strong suspicion of complicity in a plot designed to go much further than it had yet done, were technically innocent people. The province would however obviously be better for their absence; and both were banished from their towns, with their families and impedimenta, to Qasab and Shaqra respectively, though later on it was considered advisable to transfer Suwaiyid, the dismissed Amir of Jalajil, to the greater security of Dar'iya itself. Nasir ibn Ibrahim, the brother of one of the murderers of 'Uthman, was appointed Amir of Harma, while the whole province of Sudair and Mu-naikh (including Majma'a and Harma) was placed under 'Abdullah ibn Jalajil, apparently a relation of Suwaiyid), with headquarters at Jalajil.

So Sa'ud returned home; and 'Abdul-'Aziz was once more free to tackle the situation in Kharj, proceeding himself to Dilam at a moment when Zaid ibn Zamil happened to be away at Yamama. The attack was pressed vigorously, and there was fighting in the outskirts of the town itself. Zaid however had rapidly collected a force to come to the help of his fellow-citizens; and finding his access to the town barred by the battle, he threw his force against the Wahhabi camp, in which 'Abdul-'Aziz himself happened to be with the camels and impedimenta of the expedition. The attack was vigorously resisted, though the defenders lost some twenty men and a number of camels, before the main body attacking the town became aware of what was happening in its rear. The assault was immediately discontinued, and the troops evacuated the town to go to the rescue of the camp. Zaid took advantage of the lull to enter the town, while 'Abdul-'Aziz withdrew his troops to the neighbouring oasis of Na'jan: cutting down palms and destroying growing crops before returning, once more unsuccessful, to Dar'iya.

In the following spring (1778) Sa'dun ibn 'Arai'ar, the prince of al Ahsa, came up to Kharj, possibly to negotiate an alliance against the Wahhabi State with Zaid ibn Zamil and his allies. For some unexplained reason however he decided to come to an understanding with 'Abdul-'Aziz, who readily agreed to his suggestion of a peace pact. There seems however to have been no actual meeting between the rival chiefs, though Sa'dun passed through Banban on his way to the watering of Mubaïdh near

the Mujazzal ridge. Whether this constituted a breach of the peace or not, Sa'dun appears to have been nervous of a possible attack from Dar'iya, and somewhat hastily decided to return to al Ahsa in spite of the midsummer heat of June or July, which took toll of his sheep and camels. Early in the following year (1779) however we find him intriguing with the people of Harma and Zilfi for a concerted attack on Majma'a, now a recognised hotbed of Wahhabi zeal with a garrison of Wahhabi troops. The first step was taken by the folk of Harma, who occupied the turrets of the extensive palm-groves round the town. The full force of Zilfi now came to reinforce them, while Sa'dun also arrived shortly after with a formidable army.

The people of Majma'a shut themselves up in their town and fort to stand a siege, while the enemy made free of the palm-groves and cultivation, cutting down the trees and grazing their camels and sheep on the growing crops. The town's only hope was for help from Dar'iya; but it was reduced to such straits that a message had been sent to Sa'dun suggesting a truce pending negotiations for surrender, when it became known that a Wahhabi force under Hasan ibn Mishari ibn Sa'ud was at Jala-jil, now the capital of the province, planning the relief of Majma'a. A small but strong force was accordingly sent to try to get through the enemy lines to the fort under cover of darkness. It seems to have got through unobserved, and ropes were let down from the roof of the fort to admit them. The besiegers now lost heart; and the first to abandon the enterprise were the Badawin of Bani Khalid, weary of a sedentary deadlock which deprived their camels of their normal pastures. The Zilfi contingent also made for home, leaving Harma alone to carry on the fight against its neighbour.

'Abdul-'Aziz had previously sent his brother 'Abdullah to the rescue of the latter; and he was shortly afterwards joined by Sa'ud with a large force, to besiege Harma. The tables were now turned on the aggressors, who were attacked vigorously day after day until they were pressed back to their fort, and closely besieged. When they sued for peace Sa'ud insisted that all persons who had been guilty of disturbing the peace should be banished, and that all the palm-groves of the town should be made over to the State treasury. Peace having been agreed to on these terms, Sa'ud reported progress to his father, who wrote back that, as the whole population of Harma had consistently been

disturbers of the peace for a long time, the town should be razed to the ground. Sa'ud accordingly had the town wall demolished and many of the houses destroyed, while all the guilty persons were banished: most of them going to Zubair, while others settled down in Majma'a.

Soon after this episode two expeditions were launched against Zilfi, under Sa'ud and 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad respectively, to punish it for its share in the trouble. On both occasions there was some fighting without appreciable result. On reaching Raghaba on his way home 'Abdullah had given the Sudair and Washm contingents permission to depart to their homes; but when the remainder of the force reached the wells of Hafar al 'Atk, it was suddenly confronted by Sa'dun ibn 'Arai'ar in person with a large Bani Khalid army. The depleted Wahhabi force took a severe beating, losing very heavily in casualties, which included the commanders of the Washm and Sudair contingents, who had presumably remained with 'Abdullah to visit the Imam. 'Abdullah himself was evidently among 'the very few who made good their escape', while Sa'dun proceeded to raid a section of the Subai', only to find that the military contingent of Dhurma was encamped at the same watering. His cavalry were routed, and a Shaikh of al 'Amair, Sa'dun ibn Khalid, fell into the hands of the enemy, who released him on payment of a ransom of 3,000 gold pieces.

The Subai' then proceeded to raid the Dhafir, camped at Safwan on the 'Iraq border, and lifted 4,000 of their camels. Wahhabi contingents again visited Kharj, and penetrated as far as Hauta for a bout of ineffective skirmishing; while Zilfi was also attacked, and made submission to the Wahhabi régime, which seems now to have been fairly solidly established from the Qasim in the north to Kharj in the south, and from the Dahna in the east to the 'Ataiba and Harb country in the west, which fell somewhat loosely into the sphere of the Sharifs of Mecca, though the tribes themselves were virtually self-governing. The constant adhesion and defection of units in the Wahhabi sphere during these years would seem to reflect the spirit of the times both in the settled and in the nomad areas; where the natural repugnance of the Arabs to any form of discipline or control was being increasingly challenged by a spiritual movement based on authoritarian principles, which were widely recognised as valid, though in fact honoured more in the breach than the observ-

ance. And no one saw more clearly than Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab himself from the beginning of his ministry that overwhelming force would be needed to make the word of God prevail over the semi-pagan customs of the desert Arab. The main weakness of the movement lay in the fact that the Badawin, while always ready to take part in enterprises promising good returns in loot, were never really conscious of a spiritual mission: while in the towns and villages local rivalries were too often the determining factor in the choice between adhesion to or rejection of the Wahhabi cause. One cannot detect in the political development of these times any sense of that brotherhood of (rightly guided) man, which was to become the cornerstone of the Ikhwan movement of the twentieth century.

The year 1781 was one of unrest and instability over a wide area, extending from the southern province of al Fara' to the tribal marches of 'Iraq. The main preoccupation of the Wahhabi ruler was again with Kharj, with extensions of the usual raiding to the districts of Hauta and Hariq. After an attack on Dilam, Sa'ud turned his attention to the east, where he built the fort of al Bida' near Sulaimiya, and posted a garrison in it under the command of Muhammad ibn Ghushaiyan, to keep a watch on the activities of the Yamama chief, Hasan ibn Rashid at Bijadi, who however died during the year, while his brother Farhan was killed in the skirmishing round the town. The Dilam folk appealed to Sa'dun ibn 'Arai'ar for help in an attempt to suppress this dangerous outpost of Wahhabi power; but two attacks on Bida' were easily repulsed, and Sa'dun went off in search of fresh pastures farther north. Meanwhile 'Abdul-'Aziz himself, having led a foray down to Hauta, where he had the better of sporadic fighting and did much damage among the palm-groves, turned back on Dilam, to treat it and its outlying suburbs in similar fashion. The centre of gravity now shifted to the north, where Sa'dun and his allies of the 'Anaza (Hablan section) attacked and routed the Dahamsha under Mijlad ibn Fawwaz: while the Dhafir tribe came out in force against various tribal concentrations in the neighbourhood of Muba'idh, whither Sa'ud now hastened to meet them. The sight of their numbers deterred him from an immediate attack, and he retired to Tumair to await the reinforcements he had summoned. On their arrival he advanced against the Dhafir concentration, and utterly defeated them: capturing all their

camp furniture, and immense quantities of livestock, including 17,000 sheep, 5,000 camels and 15 mares.

Meanwhile the pot of rebellion was simmering in the Qasim, where by the beginning of 1782 all was ready for a general rising against the local champions of Wahhabism, of whom some principal men were killed, including Mansur and Thunaian of the Abal-Khail family. The rebels now appealed to Sa'dun ibn 'Arai'ar, who soon appeared before Buraida with a large army comprising, besides his own Bani Khalid, considerable elements of the Dhafir and Shammar. It would seem that the whole population of the Qasim was behind the revolt except the towns of Buraida, Rass and Tanuma; and Buraida was of course the mainspring of the loyalist cause under its Amir, Hujailan ibn Hamad of Al 'Alaiyan, who would seem to have succeeded 'Abdullah ibn Hasan, on the latter's death in action in al Kharj. During the siege of some four months which ensued, a member of the 'Alaiyan family, Sulaiman al Hujailani by name, was suspected of a treacherous understanding with the enemy, and slain out of hand by Hujailan himself.

This action met with immediate public approval, and Sa'dun, realising that the siege might last indefinitely, abandoned the enterprise, and marched by way of Zilfi to Muba'idh, where he camped to reorganise his force, and was joined by very considerable reinforcements from many directions. The banished leaders of various towns of Sudair hastened to join him from Zubair and elsewhere, while his most important accession of strength was the Kharj contingent which now came up with Zaid ibn Zamil. By the middle of November the whole army was ready for action, and it was decided that the first attack should be against the town of Raudha, whose exiled chiefs were with Sa'dun. These were sent forward with a strong force, detached from the main body, and had no difficulty in occupying the town under cover of darkness, while the Wahhabi garrison in the great fort agreed next morning to surrender and depart on a guarantee of immunity from molestation in the process. Sa'dun now came up to make his headquarters at Raudha during the time needed for the stabilisation of the situation under the restored rule of the Al Madhi: whereupon he left them to fend for themselves, and departed, while other contingents also withdrew to their homes.

Now Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz was at this time encamped at

Thadiq, watching developments; and no sooner had Sa'dun withdrawn and his army disbanded than he sent forward elements of his force to attack Raudha: the initial operations being entrusted mainly to the village contingents of Sudair itself, with a stiffening of men from 'Aridh and Washm. The Amir, 'Aun ibn Mani', was killed in action, and succeeded by his brother, 'Aqil; and the struggle continued in the usual desultory manner, until Sa'ud himself came up with the main body of his army to increase the pressure on the defenders. The outlying palm-groves were occupied, and many trees destroyed; and in due course there was only the fort left in the hands of 'Aqil. In these circumstances he was forced to sue for peace, which was agreed to on harsh terms: a large sum of money being demanded as indemnity, while the Al Madhi family and its adherents were once more banished. Having thus occupied Raudha, Sa'ud proceeded to look into the affairs of neighbouring towns suspected of helping the Al Madhi rebels, including al Dakhila and al Fara'a, before returning home to prepare for the next season's activities, which took him far afield to Mustajidda for a raid on a section of the Mutair.

About the same time (in the spring of 1783) Zaid ibn Zamil sallied forth to raid the Subai' somewhere in the desert, and was returning homeward when he encountered a patrol under the command of Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan, which had been sent out by 'Abdul-'Aziz from Dar'iya to keep the main caravan routes open. The two parties immediately began skirmishing for position, when a stray shot killed Zaid. This disaster took the heart out of his followers, who lost ten men in their flight, while the camels taken from the Subai' by them were recovered and restored to their owners. Zaid's son Barrak now became Amir of Dilam; and he was soon in action with the Yamama folk to attack Manfuha, with the usual accompaniment of vague skirmishing and insignificant casualties on both sides. Sa'ud was at the time raiding in the direction of al Ahsa, and was returning homewards from a successful attack on the village of al 'Uyun, when he decided to pay a surprise visit to Yamama. Actually he had the good luck of finding the bulk of its population in their spring camp in the desert on his way, and immediately launched his attack, before which they fled in disorder, losing no fewer than eighty men in the process. Sa'ud then went up to the Qasim to skirmish round 'Anaiza, but soon returned

home, possibly because of the unfavourable conditions obtaining at the time from the point of view of keeping a large force in the field. Owing to the failure of the winter rains at the end of 1783, indeed, the whole of Najd was in the throes of a severe drought, destined to continue well into the year 1786, with scarcity, high prices and sickness in its train.

At the end of 1784 or the beginning of the following year Sa'ud led an expedition down to Kharj; and, receiving news of a rich caravan of foodstuffs destined for that province and for the town of Hauta, made his dispositions to waylay it at the watering of Thulaima, in the desert about a dozen miles from Yamama. The large caravan with its escort of 300 warriors had run out of water; and its advance guard raced for the wells as soon as the palms of the little oasis were sighted in the distance. Sa'ud's men had no difficulty in disposing of them; but the caravan halted on hearing the shooting, while its escort made ready to defend it against attack. It was however easy enough prey, though the escort put up a desperate fight, losing about half its total strength, including Zamil, another son of the redoubtable Zaid. The survivors scattered in flight, leaving the whole caravan and its precious wares to the enemy; and, as if this were not tragedy enough for the people of Kharj, living under famine conditions, the peace of Dilam was rudely disturbed soon afterwards by the assassination of Barrak, the new Amir, by two cousins of his, who fled for refuge to Dar'iya. The vacant Amirate fell to Turki, yet another son of Zaid: but he was not to hold it long, as towards the end of October 1785 Sa'ud sallied forth against Dilam and, after some severe fighting, drove the defenders into the town, which was then taken by storm. Turki was killed, and Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan was reappointed as Amir in his place. Thus one of the principal strongholds of the anti-Wahhabi opposition was at last reduced to submission, and the whole province hastened to pledge its loyalty to the new faith and the Sa'udi régime: while just before this development the leaders of Wadi Dawasir had also visited Dar'iya to acknowledge the new dispensation. The year had thus witnessed a very substantial extension southwards of the Wahhabi realm.

The long drought had given rise to a very serious outbreak of mange among the camels of Najd at about this time, causing heavy casualties both in the Badawin areas and in the towns and villages, while even caravan animals, starting on their journeys

apparently in good form, were known to collapse and die under their riders or burdens. But the drought now broke with the seasonal rains of 1785/6; and when the effect of them was felt in the good crops of the spring, prices fell rapidly, and the desert blossomed once more. But that in no way served to alleviate the perennial strife of the tribes; and it was at this time that two sections of the Bani Khalid conspired with two members of its princely family, 'Abdul-Muhsin ibn Sardah al 'Ubaid-Allah and Duwaihish ibn 'Arai'ar, to revolt against the rule of Sa'dun. Thuwaini ibn 'Abdullah, the chief of the Muntafiq, responded to their appeal for support: and the confederates confronted Sa'dun in overwhelming force. After some days of vigorous fighting, the latter realised that defeat was ultimately inevitable, and fled with his followers to Dar'iya, where he was generously received by 'Abdul-'Aziz and treated with all the honour due to a doughty foe. His place in the Bani Khalid tribe was usurped by Duwaihish, with 'Abdul-Muhsin as his right-hand man, exercising some of the functions of sovereignty.

Sa'ud was away at the time, conducting an expedition against the Qahtan in the south country; while in the north Hujailan ibn Hamad, the Amir of al Qasim, organised a raid against Jabal Shammar, presumably with the approval of 'Abdul-'Aziz, who had so far made no move in that direction. A large caravan bringing piece-goods and other merchandise from 'Iraq to Hail was intercepted and captured in the desert, and Hujailan hurried home with his booty before any pursuit could be organised. But vengeance was soon to follow; and in the following November the Muntafiq chief Thuwaini led a very strong force into the Qasim, with 700 camel-loads of military stores alone (guns, matchlocks and ammunition for all arms). Arriving at Tanuma, he laid siege to it for some days, softening its defences with heavy artillery fire until an assault could be made with a good chance of success. The village was carried by storm, and delivered over to indiscriminate slaughter and pillage. No fewer than 170 of the villagers were killed, and very few escaped.

Thuwaini then marched on Buraida itself; but he had scarcely made his dispositions for its investment when he received news of trouble at home, which made his immediate return necessary. Meanwhile 'Abdul-Muhsin, the regent of al Ahsa, was on his way with a large force to support him in his operations in the Qasim, when he too abandoned the enterprise on hearing that

Thuwaini had withdrawn. The latter soon arrived at Zubair, whither the governor of Basra proceeded to pay him a visit. No sooner had he arrived than Thuwaini seized him and impounded all the animals of his escort, while he himself raced for Basra, occupied the government buildings and usurped the rôle of governor. The notables of Basra were then summoned for consultation regarding the future; and it was agreed that a message should be sent to the Sultan at Constantinople, requesting him to approve the appointment of Thuwaini as Wali of the province. The messenger took fright at the unaccommodating attitude of the Sultan's Ministers, and fled during the night: and it is probable that official instructions were sent to the Wali of Baghdad, Sulaiman Pasha, to take all necessary steps to restore the situation at Basra. At any rate he personally took command of the strong punitive expedition which proceeded to the scene of trouble in the autumn of 1787. Thuwaini now gathered his forces to resist the invasion; and, leaving his brother Habib in charge at Basra, went forth to meet the Turks at the Fadhiliya canal near Suq al Shuyukh. Thuwaini's army was ignominiously routed; and he himself fled to Jahra near Kuwait, whence he joined the Bani Khalid in the Summan. Hamud ibn Thamiir now became chief of the Muntafiq, while Sulaiman Pasha appointed one Agha Mustafa as governor of Basra. Meanwhile Hujailan had renewed his raids on Jabal Shammar with such effect that the citizens of Hail made their formal submission to the Wahhabi régime, which thus gained an important extension of its territory and jurisdiction.

Sa'ud now visited the Qasim to deal with 'Anaiza, where there had evidently been trouble, as the ruling chief was a member of the Al Rashid clan. 'Abdullah ibn Hamad of the Zamil family, who was appointed Amir in 1768 and was killed in the same year during operations in the Kharj province, had presumably been succeeded by his nephew, Yahya ibn 'Ali, who with the usurping member of the Al Rashid clan appear to have filled in the interval up to 1788, the year of Sa'ud's expedition. The usurper and his family were now banished from the town, and the Amirate restored to the Zamil family in the person of Yahya's son, 'Abdullah: the change being effected apparently without any opposition to Sa'ud's decree. Simultaneously Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan had been raiding in the eastern areas, where he inflicted heavy losses on the people of Qatar, and then turned

upon al Ahsa, where the village of Jisha was singled out for drastic treatment, and many of its inhabitants put to the sword. He now marched on the port of 'Uqair, which he set on fire after appropriating all the merchandise and goods in the warehouses.

The most significant event of this year however was the decision of 'Abdul-'Aziz, now about sixty-five years of age, to make specific arrangements to assure the succession to his throne. Seniority and outstanding achievement in the military and administrative spheres made Sa'ud the obvious choice as the future ruler of the realm which had grown up round the city-State of Dar'iya. But it is interesting to note that it was Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, as the representative of the spiritual authority, who under the authority of the Imam actually issued orders to all the provinces and districts to acknowledge and accept Sa'ud as their future ruler. No special ceremony was organised at headquarters for this purpose; but the taking of the oath of allegiance and loyalty by the people before their Amirs or other duly constituted authority committed them as from that moment to render faithful service to Sa'ud, not only as their future Imam, but as their actual regent, entitled to their respect and obedience in the same degree as his father, though himself of course owing the same service to the latter alone. This must have been a very ancient practice, as the Sabaeen kings of old generally associated one, and in some cases even two, of their brothers, sons or nephews with themselves on the throne, not only as princes regent but with the actual title of king. In Wahhabi Arabia the ruler, besides being Imam of his people, was and is commonly referred to as 'al Shuyukh' (in the plural), while the only other person in the realm entitled to such an address would be the prince regent or acknowledged heir to the throne. One obvious advantage of this traditional arrangement is that it obviates any need for the sometimes disagreeable process of abdication on the part of a ruling monarch, and ensures the continuity of the sovereign power in the State in the event of the incapacity or death of the ruler.

Fresh from his installation as crown prince, Sa'ud spent the winter of 1788/9 in a very comprehensive series of raids, all in the eastern and north-eastern districts and designed in general to bring pressure on the Bani Khalid princes of al Ahsa. In the Summan he met the full muster of the Bani Khalid, but withdrew

without any serious attempt to engage them after two days of demonstrations and light skirmishing. He then fell in with Thuwaini in the same general area with the Muntafiq refugees who had fled with him from 'Iraq after the disaster near Suq al Shuyukh. This time he did attack and put the Muntafiq to flight, capturing their camp and all its equipment. He then descended on a group of small hamlets in the Taff desert, and appropriated all their stored grain. His next move was much further afield to attack another group of the Muntafiq at al Raudhatain near Safwan on the 'Iraq border, whom he deprived of all their camp furniture, tents and other possessions. Doubling back to the Wafra watering, he encountered and routed a section of Bani Khalid, killing some ninety of its men, before continuing his march to the Hasa oasis, where he skirmished round the town of Mubarraz without appreciable result, though he dealt roughly with the village of Fudhul not far away, which he captured, killing about 300 of its inhabitants.

In the following autumn he was in the field again to resume his pressure on al Ahsa: his army comprising, besides the regular levies of al 'Aridh and the neighbouring home districts, a contingent of the Dhafir tribe and some elements of Bani Khalid under Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar, who had been banished from the tribe with his followers after the revolt against Sa'dun. With this force Sa'ud sought out the main body of Bani Khalid, which was encamped near the hill and watering of Ghuraimil, not far from the main oasis of al Ahsa, under Duwaihis ibn 'Arai'ar and his maternal uncle, 'Abdul-Muhsin, the regent. Sa'ud immediately engaged the enemy, and the battle was fought out desperately on both sides, until the Bani Khalid broke and fled, losing many men in the pursuit by Sa'ud's cavalry, and leaving all their livestock and other possessions. 'Abdul-Muhsin, and presumably also Duwaihis, fled to the Muntafiq; and Sa'ud installed Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar as chief of the tribe.

In the autumn of 1790 however a really serious menace to the stability of the Wahhabi State appeared from the west, where Sharif Ghalib ibn Musa'id, who had succeeded his brother Surur in the Amirate of Mecca on the latter's death in 1788, was planning an invasion of Najd with the declared object of attacking Dar'iya itself and making an end of the Wahhabi heresy. He despatched his brother 'Abdul-'Aziz with an army of 10,000 men and twenty guns, which was joined on the way by the Bada-

win of the Hijaz, as also by the Shammar and Mutair and other elements from the Najd tribes. On their arrival in the Sirr district, the small fortified hamlet of Qasr Bassam was invested and pounded by the Turkish artillery; but the small garrison, said to have numbered no more than thirty men, held out gallantly against every form of attack that was brought to bear on it. And after some days of bombardment Ghalib, who had directed the operations in person, decided to rejoin the main body under his brother at Sha'ra in the Najd uplands. This important village was subjected to a vigorous bombardment, while several attempts were made to carry it by storm; but every effort of the besiegers to capture it or force its surrender proved unavailing, and after a month of fruitless endeavour Ghalib abandoned the siege, during which he had lost about fifty men, and gave up any further idea of conquering Najd. The Badawin tribes which had joined him in the hope of easy loot drifted away from his army as soon as they realised the failure of his venture; and Ghalib was left to conduct the main body back to Mecca, with nothing whatever achieved.

On the other hand Sa'ud, who had obviously been keeping the bulk of his forces in reserve against the contingency of a serious threat to Dar'iyā, now sallied forth with a large force to deal with the Badawin allies of the Sharif, as soon as the news came through that the latter had withdrawn from Najd. It was by now well into the summer of 1791, when the Shammar and Mutair reached the watering of 'Adwa, south of Hail: and the battle of 'Adwa was fought on August 30th, when Sa'ud came up with them. The Badawin fought with great determination, but were routed and put to flight, leaving a valuable booty in the hands of Sa'ud, and losing a number of their leading men. But soon afterwards, having rallied and received fresh reinforcements of men who had not taken part in the battle, they returned to attack Sa'ud, who was still at 'Adwa, dividing the spoil according to custom. The Wahhabis stood up to the charge of the tribesmen; and one of the Shammar chiefs, Muslat ibn Mutlaq of the Jarba, was killed in attempting to ride down Sa'ud's own tent. The attackers now broke and fled, pursued by the Wahhabi cavalry, which kept on their tracks for two days, killing and plundering until the livestock captured amounted to 100,000 sheep and 11,000 camels.

In January 1792 Sa'ud was on the warpath again in the Hasa

province, where he took Saihat and 'Ank by storm, killing about 400 of their inhabitants and seizing an immense amount of booty, and agreeing to peace on the payment of a ransom of 500 camels. Meanwhile Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar, who had been appointed chief of the Bani Khalid by Sa'ud after the battle of Ghuraimil, had enticed the fugitive 'Abdul-Muhsin back with assurances of immunity and generous treatment: but had slain him in cold blood in open assembly. The Mutair, assembled at the wells of Jana'ih in upper Najd, were again attacked during this spring by the Qahtan chief, Hadi ibn Qarmala, acting on the orders of the Imam, while Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan, raiding towards Qatar, met and routed an armed party of its citizens in the neighbouring desert. And Sa'ud himself, after his activities in the Qatif area, proceeded to Jabal Shammar to raid a large gathering of Harb and Mutair tribesmen at the watering of Shaqra: capturing from them much booty, including 8,000 camels and a score of blood mares.

But the outstanding event of this year occurred during the summer, when on or about July 20th the great Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab passed away, full of years and honour, after nearly half a century of faithful service to the movement which he had initiated and to the princes, who had cooperated with him in making it live and prosper to a degree which must have given him much satisfaction in his old age, though he was not destined to see the promised land of its final flowering and extension to the farthestmost limits of the Arabian 'island'. Ibn Bishr, in noting his death, tells us that he was 'about ninety-two years of age', but in a later passage of his history he specifically gives us the *Hijra* year of 1115 (May 17th, 1703, to May 5th, 1704) as the year of his birth: in which case he would seem to have been eighty-nine at the time of his death. He had grown stout and unwieldy towards the end of his life, and had to be supported by a man on either side of him when he went to the mosque to take his place in the line of worshippers. Ibn Bishr quotes an elegy composed in his honour by the famous historian, Shaikh Husain ibn Ghannam; but the best monument to his memory is the State, which he created out of the Arabian chaos of his time to endure to this day in spite of all the vicissitudes of fortune which it has experienced during an existence of more than two centuries. And it is amply attested that he not only presided with distinction over the ecclesiastical administration of

the realm, but also took an active and vigorous part in the direction of its military and political activities in the cause of God. The perfect harmony which prevailed during nearly fifty years of constant struggle between him and the first two temporal heads of the Wahhabi State is perhaps the best measure of his outstanding genius and of their genuine devotion to a common cause, transcending the human frailties and ambitions of the feudal world in which they lived and worked together.

The autumn and winter following the death of the great Shaikh witnessed important developments in the Hasa province, where the Bani Khalid, at the instigation of 'Abdul-Muhsin's son, Barrak, had turned against Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar, Sa'ud's nominee to the chiefship of the tribe, and deposed him. No sooner was Barrak installed by his followers as their chief, than he led the whole tribe out raiding towards the wells of Lasafa (Safa?): attacking a group of Subai' on the way, and despoiling them of much substance. Meanwhile Sa'ud, with a full muster of Wahhabi levies, had come down into the eastern desert, seeking out the Bani Khalid, who were thought to be at Jahra near Kuwait. Near Lasafa however he picked up the tracks of their raiding party proceeding thither, and followed them to the watering, whence they had recently departed. Expecting them to return some time to this or a neighbouring watering, Sa'ud set up camp at Lasafa, and sent detachments to occupy the wells of Lahaba (Haba?) and Qara'a. It was actually to Lasafa that the raiders returned, to find Sa'ud in possession, and his cavalry and camelry all poised for immediate attack. After about an hour's fighting the Bani Khalid broke and fled in confusion, pursued by the Wahhabi cavalry, who gave no quarter and returned with much booty. Estimates of the casualties suffered by the tribe in the battle and subsequent flight vary from 1,000 to 2,000 men, while no fewer than 200 mares were among the live-stock captured. Barrak himself, with a small following, escaped on horseback to the Muntafiq on the 'Iraq border; and there was consternation at Hufhuf when the news of the Bani Khalid defeat arrived.

Sa'ud, proceeding now in that direction, halted at the wells of Rudainiya in the Taff district for some days, during which he received invitations from the people of the Hasa towns to come and receive their submission and pledges of loyalty. This ceremony took place on his arrival at the hot spring of 'Ain Najm,

whence parties were sent out to demolish all the domed tombs and other places of infidel (Shia') visitation. A month was spent in camp here, during which Sa'ud instituted all the necessary paraphernalia for the moral regeneration of the benighted inhabitants, including the provision of mosques and schools and the appointment of suitable teachers to explain the basic principles of Islam and Unitarianism. One Muhammad al Hamli was appointed to the vacant Amirate of the province, with headquarters in the Kut castle, while other requisite officials were installed in the various government departments, and garrisons posted to the forts and guard-posts.

Sa'ud now struck camp, and proceeded to the watering of Nata', also in the Taff district, for a month's sojourn to enjoy the benefit of the surrounding pastures for his camels and horses. News then came in of serious trouble at Hufhuf, whose citizens had revolted against the new régime and murdered about thirty persons, including the governor and other officials and all the religious teachers so recently appointed for their benefit. The bodies of the victims had been dragged through the streets and mutilated in public. Nothing remained of the administration set up by Sa'ud except the garrison in the Hisar fort under Muhammad ibn Ghushaiyan, who however, after holding out for a while, escaped by night to rejoin Sa'ud in his camp. The latter's immediate reaction was to return to Dar'iya, while Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar resumed his interrupted governorship of the Hasa for the time being. At about this time the Wahhabi State suffered a serious loss in the death of Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan, Amir of al Kharj during the past sixteen years, before which also he had been constantly called upon by 'Abdul-'Aziz and Sa'ud for military missions demanding bold leadership.

But in the autumn of 1793 Sa'ud was ready with his plans for dealing with the Hasa revolt, whither he led a full muster of his forces. His first objective was the village of Shuqaiq, which was captured by storm after two days of siege: some of the inhabitants being killed while the rest fled. The people of the villages of the northern part of the oasis now gathered for self-defence at Qurain, which was closely invested, as also was the village of Mutairifi, until both settlements purchased peace at the price of half their possessions. Sa'ud now turned on Mubarraz, second in importance to Hufhuf and close to it, where he was attacked by Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar at the head of a sortie, which was however

routed and driven back to the capital. The outlying fort of Muhairis, garrisoned by folk from Mubarraz, was now attacked, suffering the loss of about a hundred men. Battaliya was the next village to be engaged, and Sa'ud moved thence farther east to attack the village of Jubail. Sa'ud's idea was evidently to carry fire and sword through the whole province as punishment for the revolt of Hufhuf and the atrocities committed there: and while he was himself dealing with the settled areas piecemeal, the Badawin contingents of his force were sent out in every direction with orders to plunder and pillage without mercy. They certainly carried out their instructions faithfully: gathering the date harvest for themselves, and even for their camels, and cutting down the palms.

After this campaign of terror had lasted for some time, the people of al Ahsa selected Barrak ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin to visit 'Abdul-'Aziz and plead with him for mercy against their promise of future obedience and loyalty. The Imam agreed to this, and recalled Sa'ud to Dar'iya, leaving Barrak to arrange for the performance of the covenant into which he had entered on behalf of the people of the province. But Hufhuf proved unrepentant, and fought off his attempt to enter the town, though he was admitted to Mubarraz, while Zaid and his 'Arai'ar cousins lay at Jisha and Jafar near the eastern outskirts of the oasis. After some bitter fighting between the rival parties, Barrak gained the upper hand, and Zaid took to flight, travelling northward presumably to the Muntafiq. Barrak assumed office as governor on behalf of the Wahhabi State, and was duly acknowledged by the whole population.

So ended the independent existence of al Ahsa under the 'Arai'ar princes of the Al Humaid dynasty, who had ruled it for 124 years since 1669, when Barrak ibn Ghurair, the great-great-grandfather of Sa'dun and Zaid, conquered it from the Turks: who in turn had occupied it on the defeat in 1592 of the then independent rulers of the dynasty of Al Ajwad ibn Zamil al 'Amiri al Jabri al Qaisi by Fatih Pasha, who became its first Wali. Ibn Bishr gives us the names of his three successors, including 'Umar Pasha, who lost the province to the Al Humaid; and he says that the Turkish occupation lasted about thirty years, though, if the dates given by him are correct, the period must have been seventy-eight years, which is certainly a long span to be covered by only four Walis, though not impossibly

so; and it is just possible that the figure 'thirty' (*thalathin*) may be a misprint for 'eighty' (*thamanin*), the resemblance of the two in Arabic being even closer than in transliteration. In any case the Hasa principality was now to be a province of the Wahhabi realm for nearly eighty years, before passing again in 1871 into Turkish occupation for another spell of forty-two years till 1913, when it finally reverted to the Wahhabi State, of which it is now by far the richest province.

Though the Hasa campaign had occupied the centre of the stage during the cold-weather season of 1793/4, with results far transcending those of the normal desert raiding of the period, it had been accompanied and immediately followed by an intensification of Wahhabi militant activity in many other directions. One expedition, of the strength of 600 camels (say 1,000 men), under 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil of Shaqra, reached as far as the Rakba plain on the Hijaz frontier, and engaged an 'Ataiba concentration near the hillock of Baghth (Barth), but was driven off with some loss. Another under Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil himself caught the Bani Hajir on the plain of Hazm al Raqi, between the Dhanaib hills and the wells of Tha'l, and captured much booty besides killing the tribal chief, Nasir ibn Shari. Yet another under Ibrahim ibn 'Ufaisan, the Amir of Kharj and son (or brother) of the recently deceased Sulaiman, struck first at Qatar, where the fishing hamlet of Huwaila was pillaged, and later at Kuwait itself, where a sortie of the inhabitants was cut up in an ambush, though the town was apparently not entered. But the most important of these subsidiary expeditions of the year was one in which, on orders received from 'Abdul-'Aziz, the contingents of Washm, the Qasim and Jabal Shammar, each under a local commander and the whole force under the supreme command of Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil, combined to penetrate farther north than the Wahhabi armies had yet attempted to do. Their objective was the northern Jauf, still known as Daumat al Jandal, on the desert flank of Syria. Three of the villages of the oasis were actually captured, and the rest, including Qasr Marid, the main fort of Jauf, were closely invested until they made submission: subscribing to the Wahhabi creed and pledging obedience to the Sa'udi régime in the standard formula.

These events may be dated to the winter and spring months of 1794, during which died the Shaikh of Dar'iya, Sulaiman ibn

'Abdul-Wahhab, just two years after his more famous brother. The last months of this year saw Sa'ud raiding the Dhafir on the 'Iraq frontier in the Hajara district, whence he returned to his capital with much booty in February 1795, to prepare for an expedition against the Hijaz. In May he appeared before Turaba: adopting the usual tactic of palm destruction and sporadic skirmishing, during which one of his prominent commanders, Muhammad ibn 'Isa ibn Ghushaiyan, was killed; but the attack does not seem to have been pressed at all seriously, and Sa'ud was soon induced, presumably by ransom, to depart in peace. Possibly the summer heat of June discouraged persistence in a venture which, with the recent thrusts towards Syria and 'Iraq, suggest that the lords of Dar'iya were contemplating an ambitious extension of their operations, and were trying out various ways of achieving it.

Ghalib ibn Musa'id, the Sharif of Mecca, evidently thought that Sa'ud's expedition to Turaba was a feeler in his direction, and immediately organised a raid into Najd in spite of the summer heat. The objective of Sharif Fuhaid, who was given command of the expedition, was the Qahtan tribe of Hadi ibn Qarmala, then encamped at the watering of Masil, about fifty miles south of Dawadami. After a stiff fight the Qahtan were routed with substantial losses, including some 10,000 camels, while their abandoned women and children might well have perished of thirst but for a providential fall of rain.

On the withdrawal of the Sharifian troops with their booty, Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil countered with a successful raid on the 'Ataiba at Marran in the volcanic region of Harrat al Kishb; and Sa'ud himself was shortly afterwards in the same area raiding concentrations of Mutair and 'Ataiba. But Ghalib was again preparing an expedition on a larger scale for the invasion of Najd, which started out from Mecca under the command of Sharif Nasir ibn Yahya in January or February 1796, making for the uplands of central Arabia. On receiving news of this development, 'Abdul-'Aziz sent out orders to Muhammad ibn Rubai'an of the 'Ataiba, Faisal al Duwish of the Mutair and to the Suhul and Subai' tribes, as also to the Dawasir and 'Ajman, to gather in force round Hadi ibn Qarmala, who was to be in supreme command of the defence forces, and was lying round the watering of Jamaniya astride the Nir hill-tract and the normal caravan tracks between Najd and the Hijaz. On the arrival

of the Sharif Nasir's large force, equipped with some guns, battle was joined: both sides suffering heavy casualties, until a determined charge by Hadi ibn Qarmala's cavalry settled the issue. The Sharifian army scattered and fled, pursued by the Najdi cavalry, which killed about 300 men and took a vast amount of booty, including the tents of Nasir and his guns. 'Abdul-'Aziz had sent up Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil with reinforcements in case of need; but they arrived too late for the battle, though in time for the pursuit, which they pressed as far as Qunsuliya, near Khurma, killing some forty of the fugitives and taking much booty.

Meanwhile Hadi's son Mubarak had been raiding towards the Yaman frontier, where the Najran tribes were engaged and despoiled; and the whole desert seemed to be in a ferment of military activity, as the Wahhabis laid about them with growing fanaticism. But in April news arrived of trouble in al Ahsa, where Barrak ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin had induced important elements of the population to join him in an attempt to throw off the Wahhabi yoke. The Siyasib tribe of the coastal region round Qatif refused to join in the movement and appealed to Dar'iya for help. Ibrahim ibn 'Ufaisan was accordingly sent down to deal with the rising, which had been kept within bounds by the Siyasib themselves, with the assistance of the Mubarraz folk, who had refused to join the confederates. Some of the rebels had already given in before Ibn 'Ufaisan's arrival, including Salih ibn Najjar, one of the ringleaders, but others were determined to maintain the fight. These were besieged in the various quarters of Hufhuf for some days until they sued for peace, which was granted on the condition that the leaders should go to make their submission before 'Abdul-'Aziz himself at Dar'iya.

In June Sa'ud had gone to the Washm province to superintend the mobilisation of the army for a campaign in al Ahsa. Arriving at Ruqaiyqa, he settled down there for a month with little more to do than what would now be called mopping-up operations and the general reorganisation of the administrative arrangements. There was some fighting here and there, but the rebellion never seems to have got going effectively, and the masses of the people had surrendered at discretion as soon as they realised that there was nothing to be gained by further obduracy. Some individuals were executed; others were imprisoned; and yet others were banished: houses were demolished

and guard-posts built; property was pillaged, and indemnities demanded and paid: while one Najim ibn Duhainim of the common people of Hufhuf was commissioned to round up all persons known to have committed atrocities during the rising. This man was ultimately appointed governor of al Ahsa, when Sa'ud decided to return home, taking with him a considerable number of hostages. Barrak presumably fled from the province before or during these proceedings, possibly to the Muntafiq country, where there was a recrudescence of trouble during the latter part of this same year. Thuwaini, after his defeat in the Bani Khalid country by Sa'ud some years before, had fled to Safwan, where he had been joined by numerous elements of his tribe. The new Amir, Hamud ibn Thamir, however, had immediately attacked and routed him and his followers; and again he had fled, this time to the Ka'b country along the Shatt al 'Arab. He had then, in 1789, tried to procure help from Zaid ibn 'Arai'ar for a resumption of the struggle, but receiving no encouragement in that quarter, he had taken refuge with 'Abdul-'Aziz at Dar'iya, where he remained for some time as an honoured guest.

Later he made his way to Kuwait, whence he proceeded to Baghdad to throw himself on the mercy of Sulaiman Pasha, who had so signally confounded him at Suq al Shuyukh. He was pardoned and allowed to remain at Baghdad: ingratiating himself with the Wali in the hope that some day he might be restored to the chiefship of the Muntafiq: to which end he sought to persuade the Pasha that he would be in a position to further his ambition to reduce Najd to submission to the Sublime Porte. Sulaiman Pasha took him seriously, provided him with arms and men, and sent him during this year to assume the chiefship of the Muntafiq, from which Hamud was accordingly deposed. No sooner was Thuwaini settled in his new office than he proceeded to recruit troops for the venture to which he was committed. With his own tribe reinforced by recruits from Basra and Zubair, he was able to bring in the full force of the Dhafir, while he found the Bani Khalid ready enough to join him under the fugitive Barrak. He assembled the full muster of his army at Jahra, remaining there for about three months, completing the plans and equipment of his contemplated expedition. Turkish troops joined him by sea from Basra, while others were embarked in a fleet of ships which paralleled his land march towards Qatif,

which was to be the base of his operations for the conquest of al Ahsa.

'Abdul-'Aziz had now ordered the mobilisation of all available provincial contingents to meet this threat, and appointed Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil as the commander-in-chief of the large army which in due course left Dar'iya for the watering of Qariya in the Taff district. At the same time he ordered all the Badawin tribes to move, lock, stock and barrel, with their families and their flocks and herds, into the Bani Khalid country, to occupy the wells and defend them against the invaders. In addition to these dispositions, Sa'ud proceeded with a strong body of yeomen troops from al 'Aridh and other districts of the centre to camp at Raudhat al Tanha on the western edge of the Dahna, whence he moved to Hafar al 'Atk for a sojourn of two months.

Thuwaini now advanced on the Taff district, and the Wahhabis at Qariya fell back to the waterings of Juda and Umm Rubai'a farther south. Sa'ud however had sent a force of yeomen under Hasan ibn Mishari to reinforce Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil, and to form a protective screen for the Badawin. Thuwaini's next move to the Shibak wells seems to have alarmed the latter; but at this point Providence intervened with the assassination of Thuwaini by a slave, as he sat watching the disposition of his troops and their animals round the watering. The murderer was slain at once, and for a time the news was kept from the army to prevent panic, while Thuwaini's brother Nasir was acknowledged as chief of the tribe in his place. But Barrak, who had apparently been in secret correspondence with Hasan ibn Mishari, and was not happy in his association with the Muntafiq chief, decided that the time had come for him to change sides. The withdrawal of Bani Khalid support created consternation in the ranks of the invading army, which beat in retreat and was pursued by the Wahhabis to the environs of Kuwait. Its camp and guns fell into the hands of the victors, who also gathered much spoil during their pursuit of the fleeing Muntafiq.

These events took place at the end of June 1797; and Sa'ud, having divided the spoils on the battlefield, proceeded to Huf-huf to receive once more the usual assurances of the people's loyalty. And during his sojourn here in the early autumn the seasonal rains broke over most of Najd in unusual strength: the

town of Dilam was virtually destroyed by floods in Sha'ib 'Ajaimi, while Huraimila experienced a severe visitation of hail, which did immense damage to the palm-groves and crops, and caused the collapse of many houses and walls. It was also either during this summer or that of the following year that floods of great violence did much damage at Hauta and in Wadi Hanifa, where Dar'iya itself suffered heavily, and also 'Ayaina. The campaigning season was however not interrupted; and we hear of raids by the Dawasir chief against the Hijaz tribe of Shahrān near Bisha, and by Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil against the Persian Gulf island of al 'Amair, which was the first overseas acquisition of the Wahhabi State, at the expense of Bahrain.

On the death of Thuwaini, Sulaiman Pasha had reappointed Hamud ibn Thamir to the chiefship of the Muntafiq as a first step in his plans for the resumption of his offensive against the Wahhabis. Meanwhile Sharif Ghalib had taken up the running with an expedition against the Qahtan, who were at the watering of 'Uqailan, north of Bisha; but the troops, unable to get at the water and reduced to straits by thirst, were easy victims for the Badawin, who routed them with considerable loss. This was followed by an attack on the Bisha oasis itself by the Dawasir chief, Rubai' ibn Zaid, who pressed his operations with such vigour that the population offered their submission. They were however immediately subjected to a counter-offensive by Sharif Fuhaid ibn 'Abdullah, who was sent with a strong force by Ghalib, and had little option but to surrender in the absence of Wahhabi support. Fuhaid then attacked Ranya on his return journey, though he achieved little in the process: while Hadi ibn Qarmala opened an offensive in two stages against the Buqum tribe in the Turaba neighbourhood.

These operations bring us to the beginning of 1798, when 'Abdul-'Aziz sent a force from al Ahsa to attack Kuwait, where the grazing camels of the community were captured in large numbers, and a sortie of the garrison was thrown back with heavy losses, though the attackers failed to get a lodgement in the town. On the other side of the peninsula Hamud ibn Rubai'an, the chief of the 'Ataiba, hitherto vaguely reckoned as being under Hijaz sovereignty, sent a deputation to 'Abdul-'Aziz offering the tribe's submission to the Wahhabi government, and the payment of an indemnity for their past offences. This was duly arranged; but the defection of the 'Ataiba nettled

Ghalib into action, and he himself took command of an expedition to attack Hadi ibn Qarmala of the Qahtan. After a battle in the desert, in which Hadi had the worst of the exchanges, the latter retired on Ranya, while Ghalib, camping at Qunsuliya, kept up a desultory attack on the oasis without any appreciable reward for his trouble. Meanwhile the shares of the Wahhabi cause were evidently rising in the western marches; and the defection of the Buqum to the Wahhabi camp was another bitter blow for Ghalib.

'Abdul-'Aziz now switched his offensive to the north: sending Hujailan ibn Hamad, the Amir of Buraida, to raid the Shararat on the Syrian border with telling effect. About 120 of the tribesmen were killed, and an enormous booty collected for division between the State and the personnel of the victorious army. Meanwhile in March of this year Sa'ud himself led an army against the borders of 'Iraq: first raiding Suq al Shuyukh, and then turning towards Samawa, where he encountered a strong Badawin concentration, mainly of Shammar and Dhafir, under Mutlaq ibn Muhammad, the Jarba chief, at the wells of al Abyadh. In the desperate fighting which ensued Mutlaq himself was killed, and the Wahhabis carried the day, and captured the enemy camp and all its contents, though their own losses were considerable, and included Barrak ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin, whose chequered career thus came to an end.

While Sa'ud was thus engaged in the east, Sharif Ghalib was leading a large army, with a stiffening of Egyptian and Moroccan troops, in an offensive against the south-western oases. In spite of much cutting down of palms and vigorous skirmishing during a sojourn of three weeks, he failed to make any impression on the defenders, and drew off to Bisha, where, with the connivance of friendly elements, he managed to secure the submission of the whole oasis, including Junaina and Raushan, the principal champions of Wahhabism. 'Very pleased with himself, and indeed above himself', as the historian remarks, he returned from this expedition by way of Khurma, where he was encamped with his great army spread out round him, when he was attacked by a large Wahhabi force under Hadi ibn Qarmala. Their unexpected charge carried all before it, and Ghalib's army broke and fled, leaving their camp and everything in it to the enemy, who pursued them mercilessly, killing and plundering. Their total casualties are put at 1,220 men

killed, including Sharif Mas'ud ibn Yahya ibn Barakat, his nephew Hiyaza' and others of high rank. The Turkish, Egyptian and Moroccan regulars lost over 600 of their number, whose pay, amounting to a very large sum which was to have been distributed that morning, fell into the hands of the Wahhabis, in addition to the usual loot of such occasions.

At this point in his narrative Ibn Bishr breaks off to give us a long and interesting account of the French operations in Egypt and Palestine in 1798 and the following years, including a vivid description of the battle of Acre and the arrival of the British fleet, which he claims to have copied, and abridged, from an account found by him at Ta'if at the time of its capture by 'Uthman al Madhaifi. The story scarcely concerns us in connection with the affairs of Arabia proper, the remoteness of which from the great world of those days is strikingly illustrated by the continuance of its own sectarian war in complete disregard, and indeed sublime ignorance, of a world struggle which might have swamped Arabia and its holy places, but for the British victories on its farthest confines over the Napoleonic forces arrayed for the conquest of India. The news of the battle of Acre was brought to Mecca, according to Ibn Bishr, by a man of the Harb, the only survivor of a small party of his tribesmen, which had fought for the Turks: and it is worthy of note that the same story was told again to King Husain of the Hijaz, while on a visit to Trans-Jordan in 1924, by a man who claimed to have seen Napoleon himself at Acre in 1799, when he was a lad of fifteen!

After the summer recess following on the defeat of Ghalib at Khurma in March 1798, 'Abdul-'Aziz commissioned the Dawasir chief, Rubai' ibn Zaid, to take up the attack on Bisha. With a force containing Qahtan elements he harried the smaller villages of the oasis, taking some by storm and accepting the surrender of others, until Raushan itself surrendered, and pledged its loyalty to Salim ibn Muhammad ibn Shakban, who had been nominated by 'Abdul-'Aziz as the new Amir of the whole district. But early in the following year Sulaiman Pasha of 'Iraq organised a very large army of regulars and Badawin, with much artillery and no fewer than 18,000 cavalry, for the invasion of al Ahsa. The people of Hufhuf, Mubarraz and the villages of the oasis hastened to surrender to the commander, 'Ali Kaikhiya; but the garrisons of the forts at Hufhuf and

Mubarraz (Qasr Sahud), under Ibrahim ibn Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan and Majid ibn Sulaiman of Thadiq respectively, defied the invaders, who first turned their attention to Mubarraz. For two whole months, from early in February to early in April 1799, 'Ali Kaikhiya tried every device of siege warfare on Majid's small garrison of about a hundred men, and the walls of the fort were breached and assaulted again and again: but all to no end. And the arrival of news that Sa'ud was on the way to relieve the pressure on his commanders decided 'Ali Kaikhiya to raise the siege and depart. Before doing so however he took the precaution of burning all his siege paraphernalia, and burying his ammunition in the desert.

Sa'ud, on hearing of this development, hastened to Thaj to intercept the retreating enemy, who halted to reorganise for battle at the wells of Shibak near by. Some days passed in desultory skirmishing by both sides, after which Kaikhiya proposed a truce, to which Sa'ud agreed on the understanding that the Turks should return home unmolested. He himself proceeded to al Ahsa to see to the rebuilding of the forts and other defensive positions of the province, over which he appointed Sulaiman ibn Muhammad ibn Majid, the father of the hero of Mubarraz, to be Amir. It was high summer by the time that he reached Dar'iya, to receive the news of the successful performance of the Meccan pilgrimage by a party from Washm and the Qasim under the Amir of Shaqra, who was accompanied by two sons, 'Ali and Ibrahim, of the late Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab. This had been made possible by the fact that Ghalib, after his defeat at Khurma, had written to 'Abdul-'Aziz proposing peace between the two parties, and inviting the Wahhabi ruler to allow his subjects to perform the pilgrimage as of old.

The uneventful issue of this experiment encouraged a repetition of it on a much grander scale the following year (April 1800), when Sa'ud made his first pilgrimage at the head of all the hosts of Najd, with their women-folk and their children. Again all went well, and Sa'ud was treated with the greatest honour by Ghalib, who invited him to return the following year with his aged father. It might well have seemed that the hatchet was buried for ever between two parties who had every reason, religious and secular, for disliking each other. Twelve months later, nevertheless, the great 'Abdul-'Aziz, now eighty years of

age, set out from Dar'iya, with Sa'ud in attendance and an immense gathering of his people. But when the great caravan had reached the neighbourhood of Dawadami after seven days of marching, 'Abdul-'Aziz complained of feeling unwell; and it was decided that he should return home, while Sa'ud should stand proxy for him in the pilgrimage rites. Again Sa'ud was received with every mark of honour by his Sharifian host; and, having presented a large sum of money, besides gifts in kind, for distribution among the poor of the Haramain, he returned to Dar'iya, doubtless well pleased with the friendly relations now apparently firmly established with his western neighbours.

For just about two whole years now all military operations had been in abeyance: at least we seem to have no record of any such activities, and the truce, originally proposed by Ghalib, seemed to have applied itself tacitly on all the frontiers of Wahhabi Arabia. But it was Sa'ud himself who broke the spell of peace, when he led an expedition to the 'Iraq frontier during the winter of 1801/2. After the usual desultory skirmishing with the Muntafiq and Dhafir, he suddenly appeared before the holy town of Karbala in March 1802. After a short siege it was carried by storm, and given over to slaughter and pillage; the inhabitants were killed without mercy in the streets and houses; the great dome of the tomb of Husain was demolished, and the bejewelled covering of his grave carried off as spoil; and everything of value in the town was collected and taken off to the watering of al Abyadh, near Samawa, where Sa'ud settled down for a space to count his gains and distribute them in the traditional manner. He then returned to Dar'iya to receive the congratulations of his father and his people on the first doughty blow struck in the service of the true faith against a dispensation which was regarded in Wahhabi eyes as the incarnation of infidelity. It was certainly an act which shocked the world far beyond the limits of the Shia' persuasion: and may be regarded as the starting-point of a general revulsion against Wahhabism, which was to have disastrous consequences for the Wahhabi State. But there was only joy in Dar'iya without reserve; and the pattern set at Karbala was soon to be copied in the holy cities of the Hijaz before the tide of retribution began to flow. And it was a nameless victim of the Karbala atrocities who was to strike the first blow in expiation of the sacrilege.

Meanwhile, about the middle of May 1801, the ruler of Masqat, Sultan ibn Ahmad ibn 'Said, had organised an impressive naval expedition against the islands of Bahrain, which he had little difficulty in wresting from the Khalifa ('Atban) chiefs, who had won them from the Persians about half a century earlier. The Khalifa ruler appealed to Dar'iya for help in recovering his possessions; and after a stern struggle the invading force was ejected from the islands with a loss of some 2,000 men.

Returning to the main stream of events in the Wahhabi world in 1802, and recording in passing the death of the 'Ataiba chief, Hamud ibn Rubai'an, as well as that of the redoubtable Sulaiman Pasha, who was succeeded by his principal lieutenant 'Ali Kaikhiya as Wali of Baghdad: we find a deterioration in the relations between Dar'iya and Mecca arising out of an incident, for which neither of the principals can be blamed directly, though its consequences served to expose the fragility of the *entente* existing between them since Ghalib's defeat at Khurma. The latter had now for some reason unknown dismissed his principal Minister, 'Uthman ibn 'Abdul-Rahman al Mudhaifi, who proceeded forthwith to Dar'iya to offer his services and loyalty to the Wahhabi cause. Having naturally been welcomed by 'Abdul-'Aziz and Sa'ud as a potentially valuable ally, he returned to his home at 'Ubaila in the Taif foothills to detach the Badawin elements of the Hijaz from the service of Ghalib, and to collect round himself the nucleus of an army for any operations likely to help the Wahhabi cause against his former master. It was Ghalib who took the initiative in attacking 'Ubaila with a considerable force, including a stiffening of regular troops; but he failed to make any impression on the 'rebels', and retired to regroup at Taif. 'Uthman now received a magnificent response to his call for reinforcements to enable him to take the offensive against the Sharif. Salim ibn Shakban came up with his Bisha contingent, while Muslat ibn Qatnan did likewise with the Subai' settlers of Ranya. Hamad ibn Yahya brought his Buqum contingent from Turaba, and Hadi ibn Qarmala was to the fore with the Qahtan and elements of 'Ataiba. 'Uthman advanced on Taif, which Ghalib had organised and fortified for resistance; but the sight of the enormous numbers pitted against him counselled retreat, and he withdrew with his regular troops to the safety of Mecca: leaving Taif to the mercy of the enemy, who occupied the town prac-

tically unopposed. The place was plundered of everything worth taking, and some 200 of the inhabitants were slain in the streets and houses. History was to repeat itself almost to the letter just over 120 years later, when another 'Abdul-'Aziz would launch his Badawin forces to the final Wahhabi conquest of the Hijaz in our own time.

On receiving news of this satisfactory development, Sa'ud immediately sent out his summons for a general muster of the Wahhabi forces from the tribes and the settled areas, and proceeded to Sibila, near Zilfi, where he remained a while to marshal his array. It was towards the end of March 1803 that he arrived at the Hijaz frontier, to camp at the wells of 'Ashaira in Wadi 'Aqiq, where he was in a position to command the passes leading down through the mountain barrier to the Meccan plains. It so happened that the pilgrimage was being celebrated at this time; and the Syrian, Egyptian and Moroccan pilgrims, as also those who had accompanied the Sultan of Masqat on this his first visitation, were all at Mecca. They were of course all armed, and strong enough to make a good show against the invaders; and at first they showed every disposition to sally out to the attack. But their counsels were divided, and in the end they decided to depart homeward while the routes along the coast northward were still open to them. Ghalib, now thoroughly alarmed, withdrew from Mecca to Jidda with his regular troops and all his treasure and stores.

Sa'ud in due course broke camp for the bathing-station of Sail al Kabir, where his whole army performed the prescribed ablutions and donned the pilgrim garments in preparation for their entry into Mecca. This was made without opposition, and Sa'ud proclaimed an amnesty to the population, distributing generous alms to all and sundry. The ceremonies of the 'Umra, or little pilgrimage, were then performed by the invading force, which was deployed immediately afterwards for the meritorious task of seeking out and demolishing all the domes built, under a laxer régime, over the tombs of the heroes and heroines of early Islam, and other sites connected with the Islamic legend. This work lasted for several weeks, and was carried out with such enthusiasm that every building offending against the standards of the Wahhabi creed was reduced to dust and rubble.

Meanwhile Ghalib, seeking to gain time for the fortification

of Jidda and for the loading of his valuables on the ships in the harbour in case of need, was in frequent correspondence with Sa'ud, proposing a friendly settlement of their differences. The latter however, having appointed Ghalib's brother, 'Abdul-Mu'in ibn Musa'id, as Amir of Mecca, advanced on Jidda in the hope of taking it by storm. But, finding the fortifications too formidable to be directly attacked, as Ghalib had built a wall round the town with a wide moat outside it, he returned to Mecca, whence, having placed strong Wahhabi garrisons in its various forts, he returned to Najd. This must have been in the middle of the summer of 1803, after which Sa'ud seems to have remained quietly at Dar'iyā, with no recorded military activities to claim his attention. The capture of Mecca and the occupation of southern Hijaz, excluding Jidda, had obviously left much to be done yet to round off the astonishing achievements of 'Abdul-'Aziz during a reign which had now extended to a span of thirty-eight years, and an active career of more than half a century, during the earlier years of which he had been his father's right-hand man in local, but none the less strenuous, campaigns which had laid the foundations on which he was to build his own empire.

He was now eighty-two years of age; and the illness which had denied him the fulfilment of his ambition to perform the pilgrimage two years before may be some indication of his failing health towards the end of his days, while on some previous occasion he appears to have had a stroke, in connection with which he had invoked the prayers of his subjects for his recovery by an extremely munificent distribution of alms to the poor of all the principal towns and villages of his realm. In any case it was scarcely likely that his reign would be for much longer, though the manner of its ending was unexpectedly tragic. He was in his usual position, in the centre of the front row, for the afternoon prayers in the great mosque of Turaif, the citadel of Dar'iyā, on October 2nd or a day or two later, when he was attacked during one of the prescribed prostrations by a stranger, who had professed to be a *Darwish* and had been admitted to the hospitality of the baronial court, and given every opportunity of satisfying his desire for learning something of the precepts and practices of the Wahhabi faith. He was sitting in the third row of the congregation immediately behind 'Abdul-'Aziz, when he threw himself on him and stabbed him with a



His Majesty King Sa'ud IV ibn Sa'ud

knife, which entered his abdomen from behind. The Imam's brother, 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad, was at the time prostrated at his side, and the assassin turned on him also; but 'Abdullah was too quick for him and, though grievously wounded, struck down his assailant with his sword, while others ran forward and slew him. There was consternation in the mosque, but calm was soon restored when the truth was known; and a messenger was sent to call Sa'ud from his Mushairifa palm-grove where he had been spending the day. Meanwhile 'Abdul-'Aziz was carried, unconscious though still alive, to his castle, where soon afterwards he expired.

The dead could not be recalled, and the assassin had been disposed of. Sa'ud, on his arrival on the scene, took command of the situation, condoling with the population on the loss of a great chief, and calling on the people to be calm and attentive to their duties in the cause of God. Then and there he received the homage of his lieges in renewal of their pledges of loyalty made to him on the occasion of his appointment as heir to the throne. It was believed that the victim intended by the assassin was Sa'ud himself in revenge for his treatment of Karbala, of which the man was a citizen, who had seen the slaughter of the innocents (including apparently his own wife and children) and had sworn to avenge them. Another, and less likely, story suggests that the murderer was a Kurd from 'Ammariya near Mosul, named 'Uthman, whose motive for such an act is not clear except on the supposition that he was hired to do the deed, as he, being a Sunni, would certainly have had no religious purpose to serve.

In his long obituary notice of 'Abdul-'Aziz, Ibn Bishr paints for his readers a highly idyllic picture of conditions in Najd during his reign. The constant alarums and excursions of the latter half of the eighteenth century scarcely seem to warrant the statements made by him regarding the absolute security of life and property throughout the realm, even in the uttermost parts of the desert, where, according to him, horses and camels could be left untended, or tended by a single individual, who was often away so long that on his return home he was liable to find an unexpected addition to his family set before him by its proud and faithful mother. No doubt it was always the aim of 'Abdul-'Aziz and Sa'ud to work relentlessly towards such an ideal, but it was to fall to the lot and credit of a much later generation of

the family to achieve it in the Arabian desert. Of the piety and charity of 'Abdul-'Aziz there can be no doubt whatever; but his life was lived in a wicked world, and his self-appointed task of 'commending virtue and condemning vice' always needed the aid of his strong right arm to protect the weak against the strong. He always faced that task without flinching, while his patience with rebels against his authority, even under the gravest provocation, was perhaps as remarkable as his generally successful resort to force in taming the wild men of his land into submission to his will and authority. Taxes were paid regularly enough under the urge of substantial fines in the event of delay or evasion; and his calls on the towns and tribes for the armed quotas, to which the State was entitled in connection with its military activities, were generally met promptly and in full under the goad of sanctions against default.

Ibn Bishr does not give us anything like a full account of the economic resources of the State in the days of 'Abdul-'Aziz, though he provides us with some information on the subject to illustrate the methods applied in financing the needs of the government. In one year, for instance, the taxes paid by the Mutair amounted to 30,000 Riyals (perhaps £3,000 gold), while in the same year the Badawin of the Syrian desert paid 40,000 Riyals to the central treasury, and the lowly tribe of Hutaïm got off with only 7,000 Riyals. In addition to such regular taxes on livestock and on the date-groves and other crops, regarding which we are given no information, the frequent military expeditions organised by the State must have brought in enormous sums to the treasury, which was entitled to one-fifth of all the spoils of war. It would seem that the State was prosperous enough in a modest way, while its expenditure on religious establishments and education, to say nothing of its tremendous charity, must have absorbed a large percentage of the country's revenue, on which hospitality was another heavy and unavoidable charge. The pattern of administration, presumably evolved in response to the conditions of a desert country in centuries long preceding the Wahhabi movement, descended practically unchanged from the middle of the eighteenth century almost to our own times, when it has had to be modified out of all recognition in its technical aspects owing to the flood of wealth which has marked the period following on the second world war. It was always simple and well under-

stood of the people, who in the old days, however they may have suffered from natural calamities like famine, locusts and pestilence, never had any economic reasons for dissatisfaction with their governments, which rose and fell mainly as the result of personal factors. And some features of the old methods still survive in spite of the modernisation of living conditions; for instance the State's obligation to maintain such financially unremunerative services as the ecclesiastical administration, charity and hospitality.

The central administration is still, as it always was, concentrated in the person of the ruler, who is free to recruit at discretion the personnel needed to transact the business of the various departments of State at the highest level. And there has in fact been little variation since the earliest times in the methods of provincial government, which is shared in respect of executive and legal functions respectively by a governor and a Qadhi, exactly as it was in the days of 'Abdul-'Aziz I, apart from the relatively recent intrusion of customs and finance officials to collect and account for such State revenue as may accrue in the various areas. Accordingly a brief glimpse of the provincial framework devised by 'Abdul-'Aziz to cope with the administrative needs of the empire which had taken shape during his reign may provide a fitting conclusion to the detailed record of his acts given in this chapter. The provinces and principal officials of his realm, bequeathed to his successor Sa'ud, were therefore as follows:

Province.	Governor.	Qadhi.
'Asir Tihama	'Abdul-Wahhab abu-Nuqta	—
al Hijaz	'Uthman ibn 'Abdul-Rahman al Mudhaffi	—
'Uman	Saqr ibn Rashid of Ras al al Khaima	—
al Ahsa	Sulaiman ibn Muhammad ibn Majid	—
al Qatif	Ahmad ibn Ghanim	—
Zubara and Bahrain	Sulaiman ibn Khalifa	—
Wadi Dawasir	Rubai' ibn Zaid al Dausari	Sa'id ibn Hajji (at Hauta)
al Kharj	Ibrahim ibn Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan	Muhammad ibn Suwailim
Mahmal	Sari ibn Yahya ibn Suwailim	—
al Washm	'Abdullah ibn Hamad ibn Ghaihab	'Abdul-'Aziz ibn 'Abdullah al Husaiyin

Province.	Governor.	Qadhi.
Sudair	'Abdullah ibn Jalajil	Hamad ibn Rashid al-'Uraini
al Qasim	Hujailan ibn Hamad (at Buraida)	'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Suwailim
Jabal Shammar	Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin ibn Faiz ibn 'Ali	—
Dar'iya	—	Husain ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab
Chaplain to the Imam	—	'Abdul-Rahman ibn Khamis
Majma'a and Munaikh	(under Sudair)	Muhammad ibn 'Uthman ibn Shabana
Hauta, Hariq and al Aflaj	(under al Kharj)	Sa'id ibn Hajji (at Hauta)
Bisha	Salim ibn Shakban	—
Ranya	Muslat ibn Qatnan	—
Turaba	Hamad ibn Yahya	—

N.B.—Spaces left blank (—) indicate that there was no permanent occupant of the post, which was generally held for a year or so at a time by Qadhis sent from headquarters.

Sa'ud II ibn Sa'ud

ON his accession to the throne of Dar'iyā Sa'ud, the great-grandson of his namesake, the eponymous founder of the dynasty before the dawn of the new era of Wahhabism, was fifty-five years of age. He had been closely associated with the supreme direction of affairs under his father for fifteen years since his proclamation as heir to the throne in 1788; and his military career had already covered some thirty-six years since his first blooding in the successful campaign against the village of al 'Auda in Sudair, under the command of his first cousin, Hidhlul ibn Faisal ibn Muhammad, in 1767. For most of the time since then indeed he had served as commander-in-chief of the forces deployed by his father for the very numerous campaigns of his long reign. He was thus fully experienced in war and statecraft for the task which now fell to him of completing his father's work; and his reign was to see the Wahhabi cause reach the zenith of its achievement.

He was soon in the saddle again, moving northward during the early months of 1804 to Tanuma in the Qasim, whither he had summoned his tribal and citizen levies to meet him for a spring campaign. By the end of March he was still there, celebrating the holidays associated with the pilgrimage ceremonies at Mecca, after which, to the surprise of everybody, he announced his intention of returning to Dar'iyā. He accordingly released all the northern contingents, including the Dhafir, to return home; and himself took the road to the south with the rest of his army. But, having given the Dhafir plenty of time to get back to the 'Iraq frontier, and spread the news of his return to Dar'iyā, he changed direction and marched with all speed towards Basra. When nearing his destination, he fell in with a cavalry detachment of the Muntafiq under Mansur ibn Thamir, and immediately attacked, routing the enemy and capturing Mansur himself, who was sent a prisoner to Dar'iyā, where he remained for four years before being set free. After this action he camped near Zubair, whence he sent out his

hordes to plunder and pillage the outskirts of Basra, whose inhabitants shut themselves up in the town. Sa'ud now concentrated his forces on the siege of Zubair, during which the domed graves and sacred structures outside the walls were demolished, including the shrines of Hasan and Talha, which remained in ruins until they were restored after the fall of Dar'iya. The fort of al Duraihimiya was then assaulted and destroyed, while the whole of its garrison was killed. At sunset of the same day he frightened the lives out of the besieged inhabitants by arranging for the simultaneous firing of a volley by all the gunmen of his large force. But the people of Zubair showed no signs of weakening and, after a fruitless siege of twelve days, he drew off his troops and returned home, not however before gathering in for himself the harvest which was then ripe for cutting.

The Sultan of Masqat, Sultan ibn Ahmad ibn Sa'id, was killed about this time in a chance naval encounter with the Qawasim pirates of Ras al Khaima, and was succeeded by his brother Badr. Meanwhile Sa'ud had considered it necessary to revise some of the provincial administrative arrangements inherited from his father; and Ibrahim ibn 'Ufaisan was transferred from al Kharj to al Ahsa to supersede Sulaiman ibn Muhammad ibn Majid, who was dismissed. But perhaps the most significant development of the year, whose effects were to be felt in Arabia in the near future, was the coming to power in Egypt of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha. He was at that time no more than the commander of the Turkish forces in the country; but dissatisfaction at some relatively trivial incident, such as the withholding or delay in the delivery of the troops' rations, resulted in his killing the local governor, Muhammad Pasha, and usurping his functions, pending reference of the matter to the Sublime Porte, which duly confirmed him in office.

In the spring of 1805 reports of the growing laxity of the Dhafir in matters of religion, and of their taking part with other tribes in attacks on the Wahhabi tribes of Najd, decided Sa'ud to organise a large punitive expedition. On arriving at Lina, on the 'Iraq side of the Dahna sands, where the Dhafir were in camp, he summoned them to join his force in accordance with custom. Apparently however only a small contingent obeyed the summons under one of the tribal chiefs, Muslat ibn al Shaiyush ibn 'Afnan; and when Sa'ud commented on the smallness of the contribution and chid the chief, he replied that the

rest of the tribe had thrown off his authority and intended to attack the Mutair in breach of their promises to Sa'ud, who had recently settled a quarrel between them. Sa'ud now moved towards the 'Iraq border, but suddenly veered round to throw his full strength against the main body of the Dhafir in camp: killing considerable numbers of them, while others scattered in flight, and appropriating everything they possessed: an immense booty comprising all their camels, sheep and horses, and all their tents and camp equipment and provisions. The division of the spoil took place at Zilfi, whither Sa'ud proceeded after the battle. It transpired however that the Dhafir had with them at the time for grazing large numbers of camels and sheep belonging to various villages of Sudair; and these were all made over to their owners on production of satisfactory proof.

Sa'ud now turned his attention to the Hijaz, where a fort was built and garrisoned in Wadi Fatima, presumably at Bahra (though the fort still attributed to the Wahhabis at Zaima in Wadi Yamaniya just above the point at which it enters Wadi Fatima may be intended), to maintain pressure on Ghalib. At the same time 'Abdul-Wahhab abu-Nuqta, Amir of the 'Asir Tihama, was instructed to march on Jidda with all available forces in the area, about 6,000 men, with whom he duly camped at the wells of Sa'diya near the coast, a day and a half from Mecca by camel. Ghalib reacted immediately by leading a considerable army, said to have numbered 10,000 men, from Mecca to attack abu-Nuqta before he could receive further reinforcements. On the way he encountered an 'Asiri patrol of about forty men, and wiped them out; but the battle with the main body of abu-Nuqta's force was a very different matter; and after a desperate struggle Ghalib's force was put to flight, leaving all their impedimenta, including their guns, ammunition and small-arms, and provisions in the hands of the enemy. The matchlocks and small-arms are said to have numbered 2,500, while the Sharifian dead were about 600, mostly Turks. Ghalib fled to Mecca, while abu-Nuqta returned home rejoicing, though he had certainly not seen much of Jidda, which was his original target. Incidentally the presence of Ghalib at Mecca at this time does not seem to be accounted for by Ibn Bishr, according to whom he was last known to be at Jidda, when Sa'ud retired to Najd after placing garrisons in the Meccan forts. Presumably he had returned later to take charge at Mecca; but

we do not know whether the Wahhabi garrison continued to occupy the forts or not.

The whole of Arabia was at this time in the throes of the great drought and famine, traditionally attributed to divine displeasure at the assassination of the Imam 'Abdul-'Aziz. Beginning with the complete failure of the seasonal rains in the winter of 1804/5, it was destined to continue for six years (afterwards magnified by tradition to nine): during which the people everywhere endured the greatest hardships, which appear to have been at their worst in that part of the Hijaz which was still in Turko-Sharifian hands, owing to the cutting off of all communications with the interior by the Wahhabi blockade. Prices rose to impossible levels for all the necessities of life; and even the meat of asses and dead animals was sold dear, while dogs too were eaten, and the price of butter rose to four Riyals *per lb* (about twelve shillings)! The relatively better conditions obtaining at Dar'iya and the country round it is proudly compared by Ibn Bishr with those of Basra and al Ahsa: meaning of course that supplies from overseas were still obtainable.

In the autumn Sa'ud decided to press his operations against Ghalib. Orders were sent out to 'Abdul-Wahhab, Salim ibn Shakban and 'Uthman al Mudhaifi to organise a monster expedition against Mecca and its environs: and to remain there until the arrival of the pilgrim caravan from Damascus, which they were to deny entry to Mecca, if armed. Ghalib evidently found himself unable to offer effective resistance to such an army: at any rate he soon sued for peace, promising to proceed to Dar'iya after the pilgrimage to make personal submission and do homage. This was agreed to by the Wahhabi commanders; and the pilgrim caravans entered Mecca without let or hindrance, while 'Abdul-Wahhab and 'Uthman themselves performed the pilgrimage. Subsequently the former, after an interview with Ghalib who loaded him with princely presents, drew off his army and returned home. Salim ibn Shakban, taken ill during his sojourn in Mecca, did the same, but died soon after reaching Bisha, to be succeeded by his son Fahhad. Meanwhile Ghalib had been corresponding with Sa'ud; and peace was concluded on the basis of his submission and loyalty to the Wahhabi cause. The blockade was called off, and once more Mecca and the Hijaz were in touch with their normal sources of supply. Prices fell again to reasonable levels, and all seemed well.

But apparently Ghalib had no intention of playing straight; and reports reached Dar'iya of developments which seemed to amount to breaches of the understanding arrived at. Some of the Turkish and Moroccan troops which had accompanied the Syrian pilgrimage were detained for service in the Hijaz: ostensibly on the orders of 'Abdullah Pasha al 'Adhm, the *Amir al Hajj*, acting on instructions from the Sublime Porte. The fortification of the walls of Jidda, and the digging of a moat beyond them was another point in the count against Ghalib, whose prohibition of the entry of foreigners, including visitors from Najd, was also objected to. Even the fact that he spent most of his time in Jidda was held against him; and it was evident that he would have to be dealt with again in due course. But Sa'ud was busy with other matters, especially in connection with the marches of 'Iraq, where the Dhafir could not be trusted, while they and their friends were constantly committing acts of robbery and violence against Wahhabi elements in their area. Remarkably enough the commander chosen by him for this expedition of general mopping up of unruly elements on the 'Iraq frontier was no other than Mansur ibn Thamir, who was at least technically still a prisoner of war at Dar'iya. He shared the command with the 'Ataiba chief, Ghassab; and the two set forth for the Dhafir country. A strong raiding party of the tribe was found watering at Fulaiyij near Hafar al Batin, and almost entirely exterminated: only ten men escaping out of a total of about 110.

Pari passu with these events there had been significant developments in the Madina area, as the result of which the people of the city had made their submission to the Wahhabi State, and actually agreed to the destruction of all the domed tombs and places of visitation in the town and its environs. Ibn Bishr dates this development to the beginning of the *Hijra* year 1220, and tells us specifically that it happened before the peace made with Ghalib at Mecca during the pilgrimage, which also he attributes to the same year. As the year in question began on April 1st, 1805, and ended on March 20th, 1806 (the pilgrimage days being February 28th to March 3rd): we must assume that the submission of Madina took place during the early summer of 1805, and the peace with Ghalib some time in February of the following year. Be that as it may, the origin of the fall of Madina has to be sought in a visit to Sa'ud of two young men of the

Harb, named Badi and Badaī sons of Badawi ibn Mudhaiyan, who had been attracted to the Wahhabi creed, and had come to do homage and ask for a teacher to enlighten their ignorance. The Shaikh 'Uthman ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin abu-Husain was sent with them to teach them and their friends their duties in Islam, and the principles of Unitarianism; and he was doubtless commissioned to instruct them in more practical matters. We soon find them adopting a militant attitude against Madina, and establishing themselves in the 'Awali suburb, where on Sa'ud's orders they proceeded to build and equip a fort. The residents of Quba joined forces with them to make things uncomfortable for the people of Madina itself: cutting off their communications with the outside world 'for years', as Ibn Bishr says. Sa'ud now reinforced their educational establishment by commissioning the Qadhi of Rass, Shaikh Qarnas ibn 'Abdul-Rahman, to visit them annually. The Madina people, tiring of the blockade, entered into correspondence with Sa'ud, with the result already recorded of their entry into the fold of Wahhabism.

Sa'ud was then engaged in hostilities on the 'Iraq frontier, whither he himself led a great force to the attack of Mashhad (Najf). Here the strong walls, covered by a protective moat, proved to be immune to assault, and the Wahhabis had to be content with exchanges of desultory fire with the defenders in their towers and turrets. A number of the attackers were killed, and Sa'ud drew off to Hindiya and Hilla, where there was some indeterminate skirmishing. There was obviously nothing to be gained by prolonging operations in this area; and he moved down to Samawa, where he cut down palms and did other damage in the intervals of skirmishing. On the way home he put in an appearance at Zubair, where again he was unable to make any impression on the defenders.

From the farthest limits of Arabia in two directions developments were reported in this same year (early 1806 or late 1805), which were of concern, though perhaps remotely, to the Wahhabi cause. At Masqat the sons of Sultan ibn Ahmad ibn Sa'id, who had been killed by the Qawasim pirates, rose against their uncle Badr, who had succeeded his brother, and killed him: and one of them, Sa'id ibn Sultan, usurped the throne. And in the Yaman Tihama one Salih, chief of the port of Hudaida and the neighbouring university town of Bait al Faqih, decided to throw in his lot with the Wahhabi cause, which thus obtained its first

footing in the Yaman proper without any initiative on its part, though it may be assumed that the merits and demerits of the new faith were at this time being widely canvassed in every part of the Arab world. On the northern frontier of the Yaman however the oasis of Najran had always been well within the ambit of Sa'ud's ambition; and in this year he had issued orders to 'Abdul-Wahhab abu-Nuqta and the Amirs of Bisha and Wadi Dawasir to join with the 'Abida and Sinjan branches of the southern Qahtan, as also the Wada'a of northern Yaman, in a concerted attack on Najran and its districts. A force of 30,000 men is said to have been assembled for the purpose; but its achievements were not in proportion to its numbers. It never indeed reached even the outskirts of Najran, as it was held up at Badr, the headquarters of the Makrami (Isma'ili or Shia') brotherhood, where the Wahhabis suffered more heavily than the defenders. Abu-Nuqta ordered his men to build a fort opposite the fortified mansions of the Makrami hamlets, garrisoned it suitably to the occasion, and departed with his host.

The immediate result of the accession of Hudaïda to the Wahhabis was the despatch of an expedition by the Imam of San'a for its recovery. After a short siege it was captured, and the son of the recalcitrant Salih was appointed Amir: while Salih himself, then at Bait al Faqih, organised an attack on Zabid, which he took by storm and sacked, though the great fort and its strong points held out. Salih duly sent the prescribed share of the loot to the Dar'iya treasury, and divided the rest among his troops before returning home. The Wahhabi doctrines had evidently made some impression in the Yaman Tihama, whose Shafi'i folk had little love for the Zaidis of the high plateau, as the force Salih had for his attack on Zabid was some 3,000 strong in spite of the presence of the Imam's army on the Red Sea littoral.

The hero of the Madina episode did not survive his triumph for long as Bada'i ibn Badawi fell a victim to smallpox in this same year: his place as chief of the Harb being taken by his brother Badi. And the latter had not long to wait for the first visit of Sa'ud himself to a district which he and his brother had been mainly instrumental in adding to the Wahhabi realm. Having decided to make his third pilgrimage to Mecca, Sa'ud realised that there might be trouble owing to Ghalib's equivocal attitude, if the Sublime Porte decided to send down a strong

escort of Turks and other regulars with the Syrian Hajj. He accordingly took the precaution of notifying Abu-Nuqta and other trustworthy leaders of his intention in plenty of time, at the end of the Ramdhan fast or about the first week of December 1806. He himself did not leave Dar'iya till near the end of January, for the pilgrimage which would fall on about February 18th, 1807. Meanwhile his well-laid plans were maturing in the assemblage of an immense host at Madina, comprising the contingents of 'Asir, Bisha and Ranya under their Amirs, 'Uthman al Mudhaifi with his highlanders from the Taif area, and other elements from the Hijaz: to which were added from Najd the forces of al Qasim under Hujailan ibn Hamad, and those of Jabal Shammar under their Amir, Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin ibn 'Ali, and the contingent of Washm, which was joined on the way by the full muster of the Harb under Mas'ud ibn Mudhaiyan and Jabir ibn Jabbara. Sa'ud had appointed Madina as the rendezvous at which he would in due course meet his troops, to lead them down to Mecca for the pilgrimage. But, just before starting on his own journey, he sent a messenger to his commanders at Madina with instructions that the Syrian pilgrim train should not be permitted to enter Madina or proceed to Mecca.

Accordingly, on the approach of the caravan to the sacred area, its Amir, 'Abdullah al 'Adhm as in the previous year, was politely informed that he would not be allowed to proceed any farther, and asked to return home with his charges. This he did, no doubt under vigorous protest; and the unfortunate pilgrims, who had been in the saddle for the best part of five weeks, had to return to Damascus without even setting eyes on Madina, let alone Mecca. But Sa'ud had demonstrated beyond a peradventure that the holy cities were his responsibility, not the Sultan's. Having turned back the Syrian Hajj, the great army struck camp to join Sa'ud, who was proceeding to Mecca by the direct route from Dar'iya. The pilgrimage was duly performed with that mixture of humility before God and arrogance towards men, so characteristic of the old Wahhabis. Alms were distributed on a lavish scale from the Baiyadhiya palace, which he had made his headquarters in the eastern approaches to Mecca, and where he was duly visited by Ghalib, renewing the pledges of loyalty which he had been so near dishonouring since they were first made only two years before. All

Turkish troops in the Mecca precincts were despatched to Jidda; and Sa'ud's last preoccupation before leaving God's city for the city of his Prophet was the traditional clothing of the Ka'ba with a richly embroidered mantle of red silk, which he had no doubt brought down with him for the purpose. And so ended his fourth pilgrimage.

At the beginning of March 1807 he left Mecca for Madina, where his first care was for the defences of the city and oasis against any possible attempt of the Turks to recover it. The outlying forts were all repaired and garrisoned under the general command of one Hamad ibn Salim of the folk of 'Ayaina. The Turkish Qadhi, the superintendent of the Prophet's mosque and others of doubtful loyalty were dismissed and replaced by Wahhabi officials, including a man of Dar'iya in charge of the important revenue department. After a stay of unrecorded length in the Madina area Sa'ud disbanded his army, and himself returned to his capital for the summer, during which, about the end of July, there was a palace revolution in Constantinople, resulting in the deposition of Sultan Salim ibn Ahmad in favour of his nephew, Mustafa ibn 'Abdul-Hamid.

In the following year however a counter-revolution, organised by a group of high officials, sought the reinstatement of Salim, who was still in prison and was now put to death at the suggestion of Mustafa's advisers. This produced a violent reaction on the part of Yusuf Pasha, the leader of the movement, who succeeded in deposing Mustafa, and setting on the throne his minor brother, Mahmud ibn 'Abdul-Hamid, who is stated by Ibn Bishr 'to have continued on the throne until now, I mean the year 1251', corresponding with A.D. 1835/6. This may well indicate that he had started on his history at the beginning of Faisal's reign, or somewhat before, and left this remark unrevised on the death of Sultan Mahmud not many years later. Incidentally Sultan Salim, before his deposition, had dismissed 'Abdullah al 'Adhm from the governorship of Syria, presumably because of his pusillanimous retreat from Madina, and had appointed one Yusuf al Ghanj in his place. In 'Iraq too an old enemy of Najd had come to the end of his career with the murder by his servants of 'Ali Kaikhiya, who had succeeded Sulaiman Pasha as Wali of Baghdad. Another Sulaiman, having put the murderers to death, assumed control of

the province pending the arrival of the Sultan's *firman* of confirmation.

The drought continued to scourge Najd and the rest of Arabia throughout this year: towards the end of which however there was rainfall which enabled the people to sow their spring crops for a slight alleviation of their unhappy plight. Nevertheless Sa'ud had made his fifth pilgrimage with the usual immense retinue: finding Ghalib apparently entirely reconciled to the new situation, and indeed as cordial and friendly as could be wished. After a stay of nearly three weeks in Mecca, during which he was exemplary in his attention to the religious formalities of a pilgrim, and distributed alms with a lavish hand, to say nothing of the reclothing of the Ka'ba with a costly garment, he set out for his second visit to Madina. Here also he spent some days, looking into all branches of the administration, and paying special attention to the various forts and garrisons, to the command of which he now appointed 'Abdullah ibn Mazru' of the well-known Manfuha family. Ibn Bishr remarks pointedly that the pilgrimage of this year was not attended by any outsiders, whether from Syria or elsewhere.

In July Sa'ud was again ready for the fray, and mobilised his forces for a general offensive against the frontiers of 'Iraq. His first objective was Karbala, once so easily taken by storm but now covered by a fortified wall of alarming dimensions. An assault was duly opened, with scaling parties disposed round the perimeter, but Sa'ud soon saw that the proposition was too difficult to be attempted with his actual resources. He drew off his army to visit 'Uthatha, whose inhabitants fled to the neighbouring heights, leaving their village to his mercy. However he soon induced them to return by a promise of complete immunity from molestation for themselves and all their possessions, of which he only wanted their horses, about a hundred in number. He then raided the Muntafiq in the neighbourhood of the Majarra canal and Suq al Shuyukh without any great profit: before turning to Basra and Zubair, whose outskirts were raided and pillaged.

Returning from this rather disappointing venture to his capital, Sa'ud was soon busy with preparations for his sixth pilgrimage, which followed the pattern already set by his previous visits. He paid special attention on this occasion however to certain matters of religious import, which the easy-going citi-

zens of God's city had not yet been able to assimilate. The commendators of virtue and forbidders of vice were now sent on their daily rounds to see that folk did not smoke in public, and to enforce punctual attendance in the mosques at the prescribed hours of prayer. Ghalib was again in regular attendance on his sovereign, with whom he exchanged costly gifts and assurances of mutual confidence and trust. The Ka'ba was adorned anew with greater magnificence than ever before; and, as in the previous year, there were no pilgrim caravans from Syria or Egypt, 'Iraq or Morocco, though a very small number of people from the last-named country, who had received assurances of complete immunity from molestation, made the journey. So, after about three weeks in the holy city, Sa'ud returned home without visiting the Prophet, to whose city however he sent fresh garrisons to relieve those who had served there for a year or more.

On arrival at Dar'iya he sent a small expedition to the 'Uman area with selected preachers and teachers to inculcate in the people of those parts the principles of the faith and to study the situation. There a movement set on foot by the local rulers, Qais ibn Ahmad ibn al Imam of Suhar and his nephew Sa'id ibn Sultan of Masqat, was threatening to disturb the peace of the area under Wahhabi domination, on which an army of some 10,000 men was advancing when Sa'ud's expedition reached its destination. The Wahhabi Amir of the district at this time was Sultan ibn Saqr ibn Rashid of Ras al Khaima, who hastily gathered a force of about 3,000 men from the area under his control to meet the invasion. The rival armies met at Khaur al Makan between Sultan's capital and the Batina district for a desperate conflict, in which Qais himself was slain and his army soundly defeated, many of his men being killed and others drowned in the sea during their flight: the total death-roll being put at some 4,000 men. The son of Qais now sent messengers to Sultan ibn Saqr and to Sa'ud himself, seeking peace and announcing the readiness of himself and his people to enter the Wahhabi fold. This was agreed to, and Sa'id ibn Sultan soon followed suit, with the result that 'the whole of 'Uman now came under the rule of Sa'ud. Sultan ibn Saqr distributed the spoils of his victory on the spot, not forgetting to hand over the prescribed fifth to Sa'ud's representatives for despatch to Dar'iya.

Drought and famine continued to plague the whole of Arabia,

with the soaring of prices of all necessities, while cholera added its horrors to the people's troubles and large numbers perished. An eclipse of the sun is recorded on about November 18th, 1808, while a famous Qadhi of al Ahsa, Muhammad ibn Sultan al 'Ausaji, died in the following January. The cholera epidemic lasted till the middle of the summer of 1809, and was particularly severe in Dar'iya and its neighbourhood, where at one time people were dying at the rate of thirty or forty a day: including among many other well-known persons Husain ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, the Qadhi of Dar'iya, who left a son 'Ali to carry on the family tradition at the capital. At the height of the epidemic Sa'ud, always mindful of the religious aspect of such visitations, issued a manifesto to his people, adjuring them to repent of their sins and seek forgiveness of God, mentioning many matters calling for reform, and ending with a humble prayer to the Almighty to lift the scourge from his faithful people. It is said that when this message was read to the assembled congregation in the mosque of Dar'iya, the epidemic began to abate. Another victim of the cholera was Sa'd ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'ud, a nephew of Sa'ud; while four members of the former princely family of 'Ayaina also succumbed.

Towards the end of 1809 Sulaiman Pasha, the new Wali of Baghdad, sallied out with a great force for a punitive expedition against the Dhafir and 'Anaza, camping within the desert fringe of 'Iraq. The tribes were respectively under Shaiyush, whose son has already appeared in this story, and Durai'i ibn Sha'lan, who kept up the fight against odds for several days. Then, faced with certain defeat, they decided on a last desperate effort to save themselves; and their charge was delivered with such force that the 'Iraq troops broke and fled. Both sides had lost heavily in casualties, but the tribesmen remained masters of the battlefield, whence, with all the spoil they collected, they removed into Najd territory.

Here, and especially in the region of the Tuwaiq range in all its length of some 400 miles from north to south, the long drought was now broken by the unusual occurrence of a heavy storm about the middle of July, lasting several days with heavy rain and full floods in most of the wadis of the area. With the ripening of the date crop soon afterwards, prices began to fall, and prosperity slowly returned to all parts of the country.

Meanwhile Sa'ud was preoccupied with troubles in the 'Asir Tihama, where the Sharif of Abu 'Arish, Hamud abu-Mismar, a collateral of the Meccan Sharif Ahmad ibn abu-Nami, was quarrelling with 'Abdul-Wahhab abu-Nuqta, the Wahhabi Amir of the whole Tihama. Hamud had long since announced his adhesion to the Wahhabi cause, and Wahhabi officials had been collecting customs dues in the ports of his district, including Qizan (commonly pronounced Jizan, and written Jazan by Ibn Bishr), while Hamud's son had been sent on a prolonged visit to Sa'ud at Dar'iya. Matters had continued like this for some time, when the misunderstanding with abu-Nuqta arose, as the result of which Sa'ud summoned all the parties involved for a conference at Dar'iya. Here there were angry scenes, which made a friendly settlement of the trouble unlikely. Sa'ud, perhaps as a mere diversion or possibly to test the loyalty of Hamud, sent instructions to the latter to attack San'a, the capital of the Yaman; but these orders were ignored.

It was now clear that Hamud was virtually in rebellion; and Sa'ud summoned his array from all parts of the country until an army of 50,000 men was at his disposal to crush the revolt. Ghassab, the 'Ataiba chief, was provided with a strong cavalry escort and commissioned to exercise general authority over the trouble area, though he was warned not to interfere with the administration of abu-Nuqta, who remained in supreme charge of the province and the expeditionary force, which was composed of elements from every district of the Hijaz from Ta'if down to Khamis Mushait, with Badawin contingents from Qahtan, 'Abida and other tribes. To oppose them abu-Mismar was able to recruit an impressive force from the Yaman plateau, including Hashid and Bakil and other Hamdanid elements, and Najran and the Yam and Dahm Badawin. Having garrisoned all the forts in his area, he advanced with the bulk of his army on the Wahhabi force, which was concentrated in the valley of Wadi Baish (incidentally Ibn Bishr says Wadi Bisha). Hamud charged the enemy before they could deploy for battle: making in particular for the 'Asir contingent under 'Abdul-Wahhab abu-Nuqta himself. A desperate struggle ensued, in the course of which abu-Nuqta and many of his men were killed; but this was the end of Hamud's triumph. The other contingents of the Wahhabi army, now properly arrayed and well led, rose against him with all their might. Hamud's force was utterly defeated

and put to ignominious flight, pursued and plundered as it went. Hamud and his mounted companions did not draw rein until they had reached the safety of the Abu-'Arish forts: while the victorious Wahhabis prowled round the outskirts of Sabya, pillaging and plundering. The great fort of Sabya surrendered without a fight, and was promptly garrisoned by Ghassab, while his men were sent out in all directions to kill and rob and destroy. The Wahhabi army had been accompanied by some vessels on the sea, and these were soon loaded with the contents of the customs warehouses of Qizan, mainly consisting of coffee. 'Abdul-Wahhab abu-Nuqta was succeeded as Amir of the 'Asir Tihama by his cousin Tami ibn Shu'aib.

By this time Sa'ud was making ready to visit Mecca again, for his sixth pilgrimage, falling in mid-January 1810, which he had decided to celebrate with the utmost pomp and circumstance: his huge panoply of settled and tribal contingents being encouraged to bring their women-folk, while he himself was accompanied by his daughters and many other royal ladies of the house of Miqrin. The ceremonies passed off without incident in the absence once more of the 'foreign' elements, which had formerly swelled the numbers of the pilgrims. Relations with Ghalib continued cordial and unclouded; and, in due course, having despatched the usual reliefs for the garrisons of Madina, Sa'ud left Mecca for Dar'iya early in February.

Meanwhile matters had reached a crisis in 'Uman, where Sa'id ibn Sultan had thrown off his allegiance to Dar'iya, and had called in the British to attack the Wahhabi stronghold at Ras al Khaima. Its palm-frond huts were set on fire by the direction of the sun's rays on them by the navy's heliographs! and Sultan ibn Saqr and his people withdrew into the desert, while the marines landed and completed the destruction of the village, which was however soon rebuilt after their departure. On receiving this news Sa'ud immediately despatched 'Abdullah ibn Mazru' of Manfuha in command of a Najdi force with instructions to occupy and set up his headquarters at Buraimi, while Mutlaq al Mutairi was sent with a second force to recruit reinforcements from the people of 'Uman themselves for war against the rebel chief of Masqat. Mutlaq directed his main operations against the Batina tract of palm-groves along the coast between Ras al Khaima and Masqat, and especially on its main town, Suhar, the stronghold of 'Azzan ibn Qais, who

had succeeded his father after the latter's death in action against an earlier Wahhabi attack. Many villages were captured, and much booty amassed, while some 500 of 'Azzan's men were killed in the course of operations which appear to have lasted through the autumn and winter of 1809 to the early spring of the following year. Masqat itself was not attacked, while Suhar parried all attempts to take it by storm; but the rest of the district surrendered to Mutlaq, and entered once more into the Wahhabi fold.

Simultaneously with these events the equivocal attitude of the Al Khalifa rulers of Bahrain and Zubara (on the mainland) had caused Sa'ud to send an expedition in that direction before his departure for the pilgrimage. Muhammad ibn Mu'aiqil was the commander of the expedition, while reinforcements were sent to him later under 'Abdullah ibn 'Ufaisan, the son (?) of Ibrahim, now Amir of al Ahsa. The combined force remained more or less inactive at Zubara for about four months; and it was only after the return of Sa'ud to Dar'iya from the pilgrimage that they took, or threatened to take, strong action unless the Khalifa chiefs consented to accompany them to the Wahhabi capital. Sa'ud's principal visitors were Sulaiman ibn Ahmad ibn Khalifa, the titular chief of Bahrain and Zubara, and his brother 'Abdullah, with their uncle 'Abdullah ibn Khalifa and the sons of all three of them. Sa'ud harangued them roundly on the iniquity of their ways; and detained the three chiefs named above, while their sons and retainers were allowed to return home on condition that they should hand over all their horses and riding-camels and other military assets in Bahrain and Zubara. Fahd ibn Sulaiman ibn 'Ufaisan was now ordered to cross over to the islands to take charge of affairs, and to appoint a suitable official to look after the collection of revenue. The sons of the Khalifa chiefs, not liking their new status as private citizens in their own country, secretly smuggled their women-folk and treasure on board some dhows in the harbour of Zubara, and fled in them to Masqat.

It so happened that a number of British ships were at the time in Masqat harbour; and a goodly naval expedition was rapidly organised to visit Zubara. Having dealt suitably here with the Wahhabi garrison and its possessions, the fleet proceeded to Bahrain, where Fahd ibn 'Ufaisan and his troops were besieged in the Manama fort for some days, when they surrendered on

terms. Fahd himself and sixteen others were detained as hostages for the release of the Khalifa Shaikhs at Dar'iyā, while the rest were set free. Sa'ud was at the time engaged in an expedition to the north, leaving these Shaikhs under detention; and on his return to hear of the latest developments at Bahrain, he was approached by his captives with a suggestion that, on their pledging their personal loyalty to him, they should be set free to return to Zubara to discuss matters with their sons and friends on the basis of their acceptance of Wahhabi rule. If they succeeded, well and good; otherwise they would return to Dar'iyā and detention. This was agreed to by Sa'ud, who sent a suitable escort with them; but they failed to convince their sons of the reasonableness of the course proposed, and duly returned to continue their sojourn in captivity. Meanwhile however Fahd ibn 'Ufaisan had been released with his fellow hostages.

The expedition to the north referred to above had taken Sa'ud and his army not only to the borders of Syria but sufficiently far into the province to alarm the nervous citizens of Damascus itself, and to give him his first sight of snow on the summit of Mount Hermon. Ibn Bishr's geography becomes a bit confused at this distance from home; but the snow-hill near Nablus, behind which the tribes sought by Sa'ud are said to have taken refuge, can be none other than Hermon in the month of May. His objective was a concentration of the Syrian tribes believed to be in the depression of Nuqrat al Sham; but they had had wind of his movements and had decamped out of reach to settle down with Dukhi ibn Sumair, chief of the Walad 'Ali 'Anaza, in the Ghaur, by which must be meant either the Baka'a between Lebanon and anti-Lebanon or the Jordan valley. However Sa'ud prowled round the Hauran plain, doing what damage he could to the crops and belongings of the villages round Muzairib and Busra eski-Sham, whose people had fled from their homes on hearing of the approach of the Wahhabis. An attack on the Muzairib fort was attempted but soon abandoned, and Sa'ud drew off to Busra for a short sojourn before returning home with the booty captured during the expedition. The governor of Damascus, Yusuf, was dismissed from his post after this incident; and his place was taken by Sulaiman Pasha, the governor of Acre, who had instructions to confiscate all his predecessor's possessions.

Economic conditions were now rapidly improving as the

result of good seasonal rains after the extraordinary storm of July 1809. The price of wheat at the end of the long drought, which that storm had finally broken, was 4 *Sa'* to a *Riyal*, dropping to 8 *Sa'* a year later, and to 13 now in the winter of 1910: with dates at the same times at 10, 30 and 37 *Wazna* to the *Riyal*. But there seemed no prospect of permanent peace in Wahhabi Arabia; and in August trouble raised its head in the 'Asir Tihama, where Hamud abu-Mismar, having recovered from his defeat at Wadi Baish, was once more on the war-path. 'Uthman al Mudaifi was commissioned to deal with him, and the rival forces met at a place called al Wahla: abu-Mismar being again defeated, with a loss of 250 men. Simultaneously Tami ibn Shu'aib, the new governor of the 'Asir Tihama, had been preparing an expedition to penetrate the Yaman Tihama, where he took Luhaiya by storm after a short siege, and confiscated all the valuables and merchandise found in the customs house and the merchants' stores. A thousand persons are said to have perished in these proceedings, which ended in the gutting of the town by fire. Tami now continued his advance towards Hudaïda with an army reputed to be about 20,000 strong. Here the people, getting news in advance of the coming danger, had loaded as much of their possessions as possible on boats in the harbour, and many thus escaped to sea. The town was easily taken, sacked and looted, and many of its inhabitants slain; but no serious attempt seems to have been made either here or at Luhaiya to set up a permanent Wahhabi administration. The objective of the expedition was evidently the collection of as much loot as possible.

The troubles of Baghdad at this period were of local concern only, and in no way affected the interests of Arabia, though Ibn Bishr gives a fairly long account of them. Suffice it to say that Sulaiman Pasha, the Wali, who had been ordered by the Sultan to remit the unremitted revenue of many years past, was attacked and killed by the Kurd chief, 'Abdul-Rahman Pasha, who occupied the town and proceeded to help himself to its riches under the patronage of a puppet Wali, one 'Abdullah Pasha, whom he had placed in authority. The Sultan sent an army to punish him for his excesses, and called on the Persian Shah to aid him by attacking Kurdistan, which the latter duly added to his realm after the flight of 'Abdul-Rahman.

By the end of December (1810) Sa'ud was again at Mecca

for his seventh pilgrimage, of which Ibn Bishr was an eyewitness. Incidentally it was in this same month that his predecessor as historian of Najd, Husain ibn Ghannam al-Ahsai, died; and it is curious that in the eulogy which he devotes to his life and work as an ecclesiastic he does not specifically refer to the historical work, on which he himself must have drawn freely. Ibn Bishr however gives us a pleasing picture of the Wahhabi monarch in pilgrim garb, mounted on a camel among the great congregation gathered at Namira, and delivering himself the traditional sermon on the meaning and objects of the *Hajj*. And much more in the same strain, including a review of the peace and prosperity now obtaining in Arabia thanks to God's mercy and his religion, now universally accepted throughout Arabia. He ended by proclaiming that none should carry weapons in the holy city, nor any woman flaunt her jewels, under pain of his severe displeasure. Then approached him Ghalib on horseback, accompanied by a single retainer, and the great Wahhabi dismounted to embrace his erstwhile foe, now friend, before the assembled pilgrims, seated in their rows for the noon prayer, which would be followed by the march to 'Arafat for the culminating ceremony of the pilgrimage. For the rest Ibn Bishr vouches for the fact that none in that pilgrim throng smoked in the streets of Mecca, in which also none lingered when the Mu'adhdhins called to prayer. Sa'ud's favourite stance in the great mosque was on the roof of the building containing the Zamzam well, directly in front of the Ka'ba: while on this occasion he had the domed cover over the Maqam Ibrahim, or stone on which the patriarch had stood to pray during the building of the Ka'ba in his time, removed so that the pilgrims might see the sacred relic. Ibn Bishr describes it as a stone with a square top, and about eighteen inches in length with a yellow covering of gold or bronze, with the two sacred footprints, presumably under the covering, which stood about four fingers width above the top of the stone. One of the great Shaikhs of Najd, Ahmad ibn Nasir ibn 'Uthman ibn Mu'ammār, who was a pupil of Husain ibn Ghannam, died at Mecca during these days, just after the completion of the pilgrimage holidays at Muna. Another distinguished pupil of the historian, who may have been present at this pilgrimage, was Shaikh Sulaiman ibn 'Abdullah, a grandson of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab.

On Sa'ud's return to Dar'iya, he found himself confronted by a domestic crisis, in that three of his sons, Turki, Nasir and Sa'd, had deserted from home and gone off to 'Uman in search of adventure or more ample means than they were allowed by their father. There had been some argument on this subject before Sa'ud went off on the pilgrimage, and the boys had asked for permission to join the army in 'Uman. But Sa'ud was satisfied that their allowances were ample, and refused to allow them to leave home. This however they had now done without permission during their father's absence, accompanied apparently by their personal retainers. They did not have to wait long for adventure, as soon after their arrival, probably at Ras al Khaima, the Batina folk of Suhar plotted to attack and kill them at night. The attack was duly made, but the sons of Sa'ud and their men put up a good fight, and the attackers retired: some losses having been incurred by both sides.

After this incident messages were sent to Mutlaq al Mutairi, the commander at Buraimi, who now joined forces with the young princes, of whom the eldest, Turki, assumed the supreme command. A regular campaign now ensued: Matrah on the coast, close to Masqat, being attacked and taken by storm, while Turki's forays ranged over the whole arc of the 'Uman peninsula from the Dhahira, through the Batina, to Sur and Ja'lan. Plunder and pillage, with the killing inseparable from such activities, were the order of the day, rather than conquest. But Sa'ud was furious on hearing of their proceedings, and sent a detachment of forty men to Buraimi with instructions to take over the fort from its former garrison under Ibn Mazru', and to deny the rebellious sons and their following admission. At the same time Mutlaq al Mutairi was ordered to evacuate his force from the 'Uman country, leaving not a man behind.

The young princes were now beginning to feel the rough edge of their frolic, while Sa'ud absolutely refused to listen to well-meant mediation in their favour, and insisted that they must surrender to him unconditionally. On this basis they accompanied Mutlaq on his withdrawal to al Ahsa, but they refused to go beyond that: being now seriously alarmed at the prospect of facing their father's wrath. In the end Sa'ud agreed to pardon them, and the prodigals returned home to be received with every mark of paternal displeasure at their irresponsible conduct. Even two months later, when Nasir was taken ill and died,

Sa'ud refused to mourn for him or be present at his obsequies. But he now had to attend to the immediate sequel of their escapade, which had inevitably created a revulsion against the Wahhabi cause. The Bani Yas of al Dhahira came out in open rebellion; and Sa'ud commissioned 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Ghardaqa of al Ahsa to deal with the matter. And in the fight which was joined soon after his arrival in the area in May 1811, the Wahhabi force was routed, and its commander killed. It was evident now that the 'Uman area was on the point of throwing off all dependence on Dar'iya; and it would seem that Mutlaq al Mutairi was reappointed to his old post at this time to watch the development of the situation. 'Uman was in a chaotic state, and it was not till the end of the year, or in January 1812, that the ruler of Masqat, still Sa'id ibn Sultan, who had called in help also from the Persians, was ready with an army of 3,000 men to take up the offensive against the Wahhabi districts, about which they roamed, pillaging indiscriminately, and actually capturing one important centre, Samail, the headquarters of the Jabri family. But Mutlaq was now ready to come to grips with the rebel movement; and the two armies clashed for a bitter struggle somewhere between Samail and Buraimi. Mutlaq in due course got the upper hand, and the Masqat army scattered in headlong flight, with the Wahhabis in full cry behind them, slaughtering, capturing and pillaging as they went. The booty taken was immense, including all the ten guns of the enemy, which were sent to Dar'iya with the treasury's share of the spoils. These operations had lasted for rather more than a year, reckoned from the visit of the three princes to 'Uman; and superficially at least the situation was again stabilised in the whole province, except the few towns where the representatives of the Sa'id dynasty still exercised effective authority.

Meanwhile Sa'ud, having returned from Mecca in February 1811, accorded to the Khalifa chiefs still in detention at Dar'iya permission to return home on the basis of their acceptance of his jurisdiction and régime in all their territories. Their return coincided with the occurrence of a sharp naval engagement off the Bahrain islands at the end of March: in which the rival fleets were those of Ibrahim ibn 'Ufaisan, supported by Rahma ibn Jabir al 'Adhbi of Khuwair Hassan and Abu-Husain of al Huwaila on the Qatar coast, and of the sons of the detained

Khalifa Shaikhs. The battle was contested with the utmost determination on both sides, and seems to have ended without any definite decision, though the Bahrain folk had the worst of the exchanges. Some of the ships caught fire during the engagement, and sank when their ammunition stores exploded, each side losing about seven vessels in this way, while the casualties on the Bahrain side are put as high as 1,000 men, killed in action or burned to death or drowned, including Rashid ibn 'Abdullah ibn Khalifa. The Wahhabi losses were about 200 men, including the Huwaila chief.

It was during this summer that the Turkish authorities, having at last made up their minds to attempt the recovery of the Hijaz from Wahhabi rule, set about making the necessary preparations on an impressive scale. Turkish troops were sent to strengthen the concentrations proceeding in Syria and Egypt, whither vast quantities of war material, including guns, mortars and the like, were despatched to Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, who was appointed to the chief command of the expedition. A force sent by sea had little difficulty in occupying the port of Yanbu', while the main army under the supreme command of Muhammad 'Ali's son, Ahmad Tusun Pasha, travelled by sea and land: some 14,000 Turks and Moroccans. The Amir of Yanbu' fled to Madina, while Sa'ud sent out his summonses far and wide for the mobilisation of all his resources to resist the invasion: placing the Wahhabi army under the command of his son 'Abdullah, who only now makes his first appearance on the stage of Arabian history. 'Abdullah took up his position at al Khaif in the narrowest part of Wadi al Safra, about half-way between Madina and the coast, to await the advance of the enemy. His force is reputed to have been some 18,000 strong, including about 800 cavalry: out of which a detachment of Washm yeomen and Harb tribesmen, under the Harb chief Mas'ud ibn Mudhaiyan, was deployed in reserve in a side valley in case the enemy might approach by that route.

The Turks however seem to have come up the main valley from the oasis of Hamra, its nearest point on the caravan track from Yanbu': and 'Abdullah sent his advanced troops against them. These were however driven in, and the enemy arrayed his forces in position to attack 'Abdullah's main body. The latter sent forward his cavalry, under his brother Faisal and a Mutairi chief Habbab ibn Quhaisan, to join battle with the

Turks. In the ensuing fight both sides suffered heavy losses, while on the Arab side the Badawin elements proved a liability, as they gave way before the charges of the enemy, leaving the yeomen contingents exposed as they stood up to his attacks. This continued for three days, at the end of which 'Abdullah brought in his reserve force to attack the enemy's flank. The united assault of the full strength thus brought to bear on the enemy turned the day, and the Turks and Moroccans broke and fled, leaving all their equipment, including seven guns, to the victors, who pursued them down the valley until the survivors reached the coast at al Buraika to take refuge in the ships anchored in the roadstead. The Turkish losses are put at 4,000 dead, and those of the Wahhabis at about 600, including one royal prince, Miqrin ibn Hasan ibn Mishari ibn Sa'ud, and several other notable leaders: among them the celebrated Hadi ibn Qarmala of the Qahtan. The battle of al Khaif was fought during the first half of December, 1811, and it was the Wahhabis who had drawn first blood in a struggle which was to fill the next seven years with its alarums and excursions.

While the Turks took refuge at Yanbu' to lick their wounds, 'Abdullah unconcernedly led the whole of his army down the pilgrim way, past Badr, the scene of the Prophet's great victory over the Quraish nearly twelve centuries before, to Mecca, where he met his father for the latter's eighth pilgrimage, and dedicated the first-fruits of his victory to the God of battles. Sa'ud had been accompanied on this occasion by a gathering of warriors at least equal in number to those of his son's army in the field; and after the due celebration of all the religious rites of the occasion, these forces were partly disbanded and partly re-deployed in the Madina area to meet any situation that might arise in view of the actual presence of the enemy on the coast. Incidentally Sharif Ghalib had not been tempted by the proximity of his potential rescuers either to join them or to show any diminution of the respect and cordiality which had now subsisted between him and Sa'ud for some years. The pilgrimage, again unattended by any visitors from foreign parts, was celebrated with all the usual pomp and circumstance and without any noteworthy incident. 'Abdullah apparently accompanied his father back to Dar'iya, where they arrived towards the end of January 1812.

Meanwhile Muhammad 'Ali Pasha was taking serious thought

to retrieve the situation resulting from his son's defeat at al Khaif; and reinforcements were poured into Yanbu' under an officer named Ahmad bin Nabart (*Buonaparte!*), and every effort was made to secure the adhesion of the local tribes. The Juhaina of the Yanbu' district joined them, as also the mountain sections of Harb; and the inland oasis of Yanbu' al Nakhl was occupied. Wadi al Safra was now undefended, and the enemy marched on Madina, which was reached and invested about the middle of October. The Wahhabi garrison of some 7,000 men appears to have been in poor trim owing to various forms of illness; and after some bombardment of the city the people opened the gates to the enemy, who eventually forced the surrender of the few garrisons in various forts, which made a show of holding out. By the middle of November Madina was in Turkish hands once more; and Sa'ud had apparently made no effort whatever to stave off such a disaster. More than half the garrison he had left behind after the previous pilgrimage were dead: and the Turks were in firm control of the Hijaz above a line joining Yanbu' with Madina. This was clearly a very dangerous situation from the Wahhabi point of view: but Sa'ud's whole attention was devoted to his plans for yet another pilgrimage to Mecca, his ninth and last visitation. By way of preparation he had sent 'Abdullah with a substantial force to inspect the defences of the Mecca area; and the latter had spent some time in camp in Wadi Fatima without incident, before rejoining his father on his arrival at the outskirts of Mecca for the ceremonies, which were celebrated exactly as in previous years, and after which, at the beginning of January 1813, he set out on his return journey to Dar'iya. He had however left behind him a great part of the army which had accompanied him for the protection of the city, and he had instructed 'Abdullah to camp with his army in Wadi al Marr (the central section of Wadi Fatima) astride the main track to Madina. And though Ghalib had been friendly and cordial as before, he took the precaution this time of having him solemnly renew his oath of loyalty, and promise by all that was holy that he would not betray his cause. Sa'ud's last gift to Mecca was a new black mantle for the House of God.

Shortly after he had gone the Turkish forces in Madina and Yanbu' started their march on Mecca; and, no sooner did the news of this development reach him than Ghalib changed his

tune in a manner which seems to have alarmed 'Abdullah. At any rate he sent for the garrisons left at Mecca to rejoin the main body, and away he marched to the passes linking the Hijaz mountains with the great desert plateau of Najd. He now proceeded to 'Ubaila in the Taïf foothills, whence he sent 'Uthman al Mudhaifi back to his headquarters at Taïf with instructions to see to its defences and hold it at all costs. 'Abdullah himself then retired to Khurma: 'and confusion confounded the ranks of the Muslims by God's inexorable decree by reason of our sins, for which we ask God's pardon,' as Ibn Bishr laconically comments.

'Uthman al Mudhaifi was not less afraid of the wrath to come; and no sooner had he reached Taïf than he collected his children and his women-folk and 'some of his horses', and fled before his face to rejoin 'Abdullah on January 26th, 1813. A week later an eclipse of the sun provided an appropriate curtain to the eclipse of Wahhabi rule in the holy land of Islam. Tusun's army entered Mecca without opposition in due course, to be received with open arms by Ghalib; and a few days later Taïf also was occupied, and all the highland tribes hastened to make their bow to the new régime. The western oases however maintained their allegiance to Sa'ud, as also did the southern highlands and the 'Asir Tihama.

Sa'ud's situation was now precarious enough in all conscience; and he realised that only the most vigorous reaction to the Turkish challenge could turn the scales, now heavily weighted against him by the loss of the Hijaz. He immediately set out in person 'with his victorious army drawn from all the districts and regions of Najd, settled and nomad' towards Hanakiya, an important oasis and settlement on the main road from Madina to the Qasim. Its fort was already in the occupation of the Turks under 'Uthman Kashif, while the wells were held by his Harb auxiliaries. The latter fled at sight of the Wahhabis to the safe refuge of the Harra lava, extending as far as Madina itself, leaving their tents and camp-utensils to the enemy. Sa'ud now proceeded to the siege of the regulars in the fort, who after some insignificant fighting sued for peace and were allowed to depart on the sole condition that they should proceed, not to Madina but to 'Iraq: whither they were duly escorted by the Amir of Jabal Shammar and his men. Sa'ud then advanced on Madina itself, plundering various Badawin groups on the way,

until he encountered near Jabal Uhud a mixed party of Turkish cavalry and Badawin camelry. These he routed, pursuing them until they took refuge behind the walls of Madina: after which he prowled round the city as far afield as the Hassi wadi, from which he descended Wadi al Safra, pillaging as he went. He then turned southward into the mountains and the volcanic region until he reached Suwairiqiya, whose villagers surrendered on condition of paying half their date-crop, now being garnered in August. Many palms were then cut down, and most of the dwellings razed to the ground; while Sa'ud tarried some time in the neighbourhood dividing the spoils and awaiting developments.

Meanwhile Mustafa Pasha had been deputed by Tusun to organise an expedition against Turaba, where the Wahhabi garrison was besieged for a few days until reinforcements arrived to help them from Bisha and other areas. While these were being engaged by the Turks, a reserve detachment, left in hiding, worked round to the enemy camp, capturing it and putting the Turkish guards to flight. Mustafa Pasha then withdrew to Taif, where he soon had to deal with a force organised by 'Uthman al Mudhaifi to attack the various small forts in the foothills around the town. Several of these had fallen to the Arabs, who now turned towards Basal, a fair-sized oasis in an upland valley with a number of fortified mansions of the Ashfra. Having occupied these, he was attacked by Sharif Ghalib at the head of a contingent of Turkish regulars, which after some days of siege took the forts by storm and put many of the defenders to the sword. 'Uthman himself escaped, but was tracked down in the Hazm desert by some 'Usama ('Ataiba) shepherds and handed over to Ghalib, who at last had his old Wazir in his hands and put him to death.

Meanwhile Sa'ud, who had returned to Dar'iya after his exploits near Madina and Suwairiqiya, had to attend to more trouble in the 'Uman district. Mutlaq al Mutairi was now again commissioned to revisit his old haunts as commander of the Wahhabi troops in the area. He attacked Ja'lan, far to the south of Buraimi, and was returning to the latter with the ample spoils gathered during this operation, when the tribes regrouped their forces to pursue him. He had no choice but to give battle, and the fight went against him, he himself being killed. And before Sa'ud could take any steps to restore the situation, he was confronted by a new crisis in the west.

It was now October 1813; and Muhammad 'Ali Pasha had decided to lead down the Egyptian pilgrim train in person, which was to visit Mecca for the first time for many years. With all the pomp and circumstance suitable to so historic an occasion he entered Mecca, and proceeded to take over and garrison with his own troops all the forts and strong points of the city. Ghalib presented himself before the great man with humble assurances of loyalty and with costly presents; and Muhammad 'Ali received him with all honour, conferring on him gifts and thanking him for his services. But, having seen to the stabilisation of the administration and security measures in the metropolis, he arrested Ghalib on November 13th, 1813, turned his family out of the castle of Ajyad, overlooking the Haram, imprisoned his two major sons, confiscated all his immense possessions, and appointed his brother, Surur ibn Yahya ibn Surur, as Amir of Mecca in his place. In due course Ghalib and his sons, 'Abdullah and Husain, were despatched to Egypt under escort, whence by decree of the Sultan they were transferred to Salonica, to reside there in honourable detention, with due provision made for their needs and an ample allowance, while some of their confiscated property was restored to them. And there Ghalib was destined to pass the remainder of his days until he died in 1816 of the plague.

Muhammad 'Ali, having now made all necessary preliminary dispositions for the proper control of the Hijaz, began to look farther afield for ways and means of extending his conquests to Najd. Many of the Sharifs of Mecca had fled into the mountains lest they too might be the object of the Pasha's anger or concupiscence. But Muhammad 'Ali had singled out Sharif Rajih, a man of great experience of the desert, as the most suitable instrument for enticing the Arabs to his side. He would have made him perhaps Amir of Mecca in place of Ghalib's brother; but Rajih had no desire to serve the Turks, and one day he fled from Mecca to join the Wahhabis at Turaba. Another Sharif, Yahya ibn Surur, similarly made himself scarce by joining the Wahhabi elements in the 'Asir Tihama. Tusun was now sent in command of a force to try conclusions with the Turaba garrison, which had been reinforced and re-equipped by Sa'ud. But after a few days of fruitless skirmishing and bombardment Tusun withdrew from the oasis: the year thus ending on a note of stalemate, which obviously could not endure in-

definitely. And it may be remarked in passing, as an occasionally recurring curiosity, that this last tragic Muslim year of Sa'ud's reign and career, 1228 *anno hejirae*, was one which fell wholly within the span of a Christian year, 1813, beginning on January 4th and ending on December 23rd.

The early months of 1814 were marked by somewhat indeterminate military operations both in the Tihama, near Qunfidha, and around Hanakiya; but a great invasion of Najd by huge swarms of locusts may have caused more immediate concern to the people than the rather distantly threatened invasion of the Turks, which hung like a dark cloud over the last days of a man who, for nearly half a century, had known no peace in his devoted service to the Wahhabi cause. The great Sa'ud was gathered to his fathers on May 1st, 1814, leaving to his son, 'Abdullah, the task of defending the realm and the cause, which he had done more than any other man to expand far beyond the wildest dreams of their original creators. He was above all a great Muslim and a great Wahhabi, a great warrior and a great king in the tradition of 'the days of yore and times long gone before'.

'Abdullah I ibn Sa'ud

AT the beginning of 1814, after the failure of an expedition by Ahmad Tusun to reduce the oasis of Turaba to submission during the winter, Muhammad 'Ali Pasha in person was directing operations for the stabilising of the situation in the Hijaz and other provinces of the Red Sea littoral. The port of Qunfidha, south of Jidda, was occupied by sea-borne reinforcements sent from Egypt: but the Egyptian camp was attacked by the 'Asiri leader, Tami ibn Shu'aib, and the troops forced back to their boats, in which the survivors escaped to Jidda, leaving all their paraphernalia to the Arabs. Meanwhile Tusun was posted at Taif to watch the desert between there and Turaba, where the disgruntled Sharif Rajih had joined the Wahhabi forces rather than trust the blandishments of the Egyptian Viceroy, who had thought to use his influence in seducing the tribes from the enemy's cause. Similarly another Sharif, Yahya ibn Surur, had left Mecca on the pretext of attacking tribes hostile to the Egyptians, but had made good his escape to the 'Asir Tihama.

The failure at Turaba was to some extent offset in January by the successful resistance of elements of the Harb tribe, generally favourable to the invaders, at Hanakiya to a joint attack by the forces of al Qasim and Hail. But in the same month the same tribe had suffered a defeat at the hands of the Imam Sa'ud's eldest son, 'Abdullah, in the lava country around Sufaina. This operation was little more than a raid of the traditional sort, though no doubt intended as a warning to the Badawin against cooperation with the enemy. 'Abdullah at any rate was not tempted by his success to linger on the marches of enemy-occupied territory; and it was on his arrival at the Khanuqa wells near Dawadami on his homeward march that he received the news of his father's death. His was now to be the burden of defending the land of his ancestors against a powerful and determined enemy during a reign which was destined to be short and full of tribulation. And his first actions seemed to

show that he had no intention of leaving the initiative entirely in the hands of his foes.

Before proceeding to Dar'iya to receive the customary pledges of loyalty to his throne and person, he detached the 'Ataiba chief, Ghassab, from his expeditionary force to proceed to and assume the chief command of all formations operating in and around Turaba, which had now become a key-point in the defences of the realm. And in September we find 'Abdullah himself in the field at the head of a full muster of the Najd forces. Making his headquarters at Rass, he raided various sections of the Mutair, another tribe which had shown itself partial to Egyptian influence, over a wide area. And in November he turned once more towards the Hijaz to deal with the Harb in the Jabal Ghurab lava country, whence he retired to the Qasim for a prolonged sojourn before returning to Dar'iya in February 1815. Meanwhile he had despatched his brother, Faisal, with his main force to take over the command at Turaba and direct operations on the frontier, where he was soon joined by Tami ibn Shu'aib with large reinforcements, reckoned at some 20,000 men, from the Hijaz mountains and the Tihama. The combined army, about 30,000 strong, moved *via* the Ghuzail watering in Wadi Turaba towards Basal, between it and Taif, where the Egyptians were found in considerable force and attacked. The day went in favour of the Wahhabis; but on the morrow the enemy was reinforced, presumably by Tusun; and the various Arab contingents were attacked and routed piecemeal, though Faisal's own force held its ground to withdraw in good order (and apparently unpursued) to Turaba, where he intended to rally his army for another throw with the enemy. Tami and his Badawin multitude had however melted away into the desert; and, when news arrived of an Egyptian advance, Faisal evacuated Turaba and went south to Ranya, where he dispersed his local allies before returning to Najd.

Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, who appears to have taken over the command in person either at or just after the battle of Basal, now occupied Turaba, and advanced on Bisha and Tabala, subduing all opposition and ordering the affairs of State as he went. Sharif Rajih, now back in the winning fold, was sent off to occupy and sack Ranya for its previous support of the Wahhabis; and Muhammad 'Ali continued south to occupy Khamis Mushait and the oases of Wadi Shahran. The Rufaida and

Shahran tribes and settlements made their submission; but Tami and his highland clans defied the invader as he made his way up into the mountains. The settlement of Talha, barring the way to the Sha'ar pass on the road from Abha to Qunfidha, was strongly garrisoned and equipped for resistance under one Hawan, while Tami himself retired to the Bani Mughidh summits to direct his guerilla warfare. Muhammad 'Ali had however little trouble in disposing of Talha, whose fortifications he destroyed before descending the pass, whence he proceeded *via* the Taiya valley to Mahail and Qunfidha. Meanwhile Tami had left the mountains for his Tihama stronghold at Masliya, whence he was inveigled into Sabya, the Tihama capital, by friends intending treachery. There he was arrested and sent to Muhammad 'Ali, who despatched him from Qunfidha to Egypt, where he was hanged.

At Qunfidha Muhammad 'Ali had news of trouble in Egypt between the Ghazz mamelukes and his administration, and decided to return home at once, leaving the conduct of further operations in Arabia to Tusun, who was at this time at Madina, making preparations for an expedition into Najd. Correspondence with disaffected elements at Rass and Khabra encouraged Tusun to act without delay; and the force lying at Hanakiya was ordered to proceed at once to the Qasim, where the two villages were occupied without resistance, while the forts and smaller settlements in the neighbourhood were also brought under control, though the towns and villages of central and eastern Qasim remained loyal to the Wahhabi cause, and kept up a desultory warfare against the Egyptians until 'Abdullah himself was able to muster his forces from every part of Najd and come up to their rescue.

In the middle of April 1815 he left Dar'iya for his rendezvous at Mudhrib, whence he proceeded to Ruwaidha near Rass. The Egyptians contented themselves with distant artillery fire, while 'Abdullah marched on a concentration of Harb and Mutair tribesmen, reported to be gathering at the wells of Busairi westward. On the way however he heard that Ahmad Tusun himself had arrived with a strong force at Dath on his way to Rass. He immediately turned in that direction, hoping to surprise the enemy on the watering; but Tusun had anticipated this movement by continuing his march to Rass. 'Abdullah now sent back the Qasim contingent to contest any possible

advance of the enemy in that direction, while he himself reverted to his original plan of attacking the tribes at Busairi. Having dealt suitably with them, he heard that another Turkish contingent had reached the Ba'ja well and fort in the neighbourhood; and he now made for them. The small force of some 120 men took refuge in the building, which was taken by storm, while the garrison was slain to the last man. 'Abdullah now returned to his base at Mudhnib, while Tusun, securely in possession of Rass and Khabra, threw out an advanced post to Shabibiya nearer 'Anaiza, with the intention of occupying the latter in due course and making it his headquarters. It was however 'Abdullah who reached it first, and made full use of it as a base for frequent excursions against the Egyptians and their Badawin allies, whose general situation in the midst of enemy territory became somewhat straitened, while some elements from Rass itself, repenting of their hasty submission to Tusun, sallied forth to occupy the forts of Shinana in 'Abdullah's interests. The Shabibiya outpost was withdrawn, and 'Abdullah moved out from 'Anaiza to the Hajnawi wells, where he remained about two months, exerting unceasing pressure on Tusun's positions.

Whether it was the precarious situation of Tusun in the midst of the desert, or the pressure of events in Egypt itself, or perhaps Tusun's own ill health, that was responsible for the next development: certain it is that a Turkish officer, accompanied by two guides of Harb and Mutair respectively, was intercepted on his way to Tusun by Wahhabi patrols, and brought to 'Abdullah's camp. The two guides were slain off-hand with no questions asked; but the Turkish officer was able to convey to 'Abdullah the information that he was the bearer of a letter to Tusun from his father, ordering him to make peace and return to Egypt. The officer after honourable treatment as a guest was sent on to Tusun; and it was not long before an agreement was arrived at between the two commanders: (a) to terminate hostilities; (b) to end Turkish intervention in the affairs of Najd; and (c) to establish freedom of trade between Arabia and its neighbours, and to assure the freedom of the pilgrimage for all concerned. The Egyptian forces accordingly left Rass for Madina in the middle of July 1815: Tusun being accompanied by two high-ranking Sa'udi envoys carrying a letter from 'Abdullah to Muhammad 'Ali, by whom

the truce was duly confirmed. Tusun however was not destined to survive his failure in Arabia for long, as he died in Egypt at the end of September 1817. About a month earlier the Sharif Ghalib ibn Musa'id, exiled from Mecca by Muhammad 'Ali some years earlier, had died at Salonica.

'Abdullah would seem to have conducted this campaign against Tusun with great energy and considerable skill: keeping the volatile elements of his large force well in hand, and inspiring the people of the Qasim settlements with the will to resist the Egyptian encroachment, as was shown by the tardy repentance of Rass for its too easy intelligence with the enemy. The fact that it was Muhammad 'Ali himself who had called off the invasion was indeed a moral victory for the Wahhabis, which was to bear fruit in the spirited resistance of the Najd towns to the attentions of Ibrahim Pasha. 'Abdullah at any rate had earned a respite from campaigning, and could now afford to rest on his laurels at Dar'iya for the time being, though he was under no illusions as to the need of dealing as soon as possible with certain elements of the settled and nomad population, whose disloyalty had been too notorious to be excused. By the turn of the year he had arranged for a great concentration of forces in the Qasim, drawn from almost every part of his realm: from 'Uman and Wadi Dawasir, from al Ahsa and Jabal Shammar and even from Jauf in the far north, to say nothing of the contingents of the home provinces and the Qasim itself. His attention was first directed to Khabra and Bukairiya, whose power for future mischief was broken by the destruction of their walls. He then marched westwards in search of reported concentrations of Harb and Mutair, reaching the wells of al 'Alam near Hanakiya and sweeping southwards to the waterings of Harrat al Kishb, and so homewards *via* Dafina with but little to show for his exertions, as the tribes had for the most part scattered into the desert to avoid contact with him. Many of the wells on which an invading force might have to rely had however been destroyed or filled in, while the Amir of Rass and two others of its leading citizens had been taken off as hostages to Dar'iya.

These actions had created some discontent in the Qasim, whence certain disaffected persons sent messages to Muhammad 'Ali, who was now apparently in a mood to resume his activities in Arabia. Tusun being dead, his choice fell on his son, Ibra-

him, as leader of the expeditionary force; and envoys sent by 'Abdullah with presents for the Viceroy and letters requesting the renewal or confirmation of the truce received a less cordial welcome than their predecessors of the previous year. Meanwhile the preparations for the invasion of Arabia went forward; and by October or November 1816 Ibrahim had duly arrived at Madina with a formidable force, and had set up his advanced base of operations at Hanakiya: to begin the slow but steady process of rolling up the desert carpet towards the apple in its midst, representing Dar'iyā, in pursuance of the tactics expounded by him to his father and all his military advisers according to an anecdote current at the time. His raids on the surrounding Badawin certainly had the effect of bringing them in to his camp as allies in the venture awaiting him: his principal recruits being inevitably the Harb and Mutair as of old, though elements of the 'Aṭaiba and the 'Anaza (Dahamsha) also joined him.

His raids gradually extended eastwards, reaching the Qasim frontier at the Abanat hills; and 'Abdullah ibn Sa'ud began to make his dispositions for countering the threat of invasion. The contingents of Washm and Sudair were ordered to join Hujailan ibn Hamad, the Qasim chief, and his territorial forces, who had taken up his position at al Ghumail between Buraida and Khabra. They appear to have remained there in idleness for the best part of four months; and it was not till early in March 1817 that 'Abdullah himself came up with a large force to Rass, whither he now summoned Hujailan and his army. He now marched up Wadi Rima to the 'Alam wells, hoping to catch Ibrahim Pasha's Badawin allies there; but they had retired on Hanakiya, and 'Abdullah withdrew to Miska and Najakh in turn to await developments. Here he heard that 'Alī Azan, with a Turkish force accompanied by a large Badawin contingent, had proceeded to the wells of Mawīya, two days distant from Hanakiya south-eastwards. 'Abdullah immediately marched on them and took them by surprise at the watering early in the morning of May 1st, and pursued them until they came within range of the Turkish guns. 'Abdullah then took up a position opposite the enemy's camp, but the guns did much damage in his ranks; and the defeat of an attempt to occupy the well degenerated into disorganised flight. The Egyptians remained in possession of the field and the

water, while 'Abdullah with a contingent of his cavalry fled back to Najakh, where he had left his heavy impedimenta, and thence *via* Khabra to 'Anaiza.

Ibrahim lost no time in developing his victory, and advanced to Mawiya from Hanakiya with his main force and full equipment. From there he pressed on towards the Qasim, arriving before Rass on July 9th, to find the people this time in no mood for surrender and strengthened by a force sent to their aid by 'Abdullah. The siege was pressed and resisted with the utmost determination on both sides, but the advantage of weight lay with Ibrahim, whose guns and mines and siege machinery gave the defenders no rest day or night. Breaches effected during the day were tirelessly repaired during the dark hours, and counter-mines were driven from inside to nullify the mines of the attackers, while the Egyptians appear to have used a species of rocket propelled from their guns and bursting when lodged in the fortifications. As the days drew on with little hope of relief, messages were sent to 'Abdullah, still lying at 'Anaiza but apparently helpless to intervene, begging for urgent assistance or, in the alternative, his permission to make terms with the enemy. Meanwhile the latter were receiving reinforcements and stores from Egypt in an endless stream; and the situation of the defenders became more and more desperate until, after four months of siege, they were forced to sue for peace. Ibrahim agreed to very generous terms of surrender on October 25th, 1817, and the defenders were allowed to march out with all their arms and equipment to join 'Abdullah at Anaiza. Their losses in killed had only amounted to some seventy men, as against the historian's estimate of about 600 killed on the Egyptian side.

'Abdullah, having spent the pilgrimage holiday at 'Anaiza, on the eve of the fall of Rass, busied himself making arrangements for the defence of the town and its forts against the now inevitable advance of Ibrahim. A garrison under his distant cousin, Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Mishari ibn Sa'ud, was placed in the important Safa fort, which was also provisioned and supplied with ammunition for a long siege, while the fort in the town and the town itself were similarly garrisoned and supplied under the command of Muhammad's brother, Ibrahim. 'Abdullah then left for Buraida to await further developments of the situation, having apparently decided that his

best course was to wear down the Egyptian forces in a series of tedious and expensive sieges, rather than to meet them in the field with the guerilla tactics of traditional Arab warfare. Ibrahim Pasha marched rapidly on 'Anaiza, which surrendered almost at once, although the Safa fort made a good show of resistance until a lucky shot exploded its well-protected powder-magazine and created a large breach in its walls. The fall of 'Anaiza itself and the hopeless condition of the fort's defences forced Muhammad to sue for peace, and again Ibrahim was generous in his terms of surrender: the garrison being allowed to depart with their arms and possessions, and dispersing at once to their homes. The Qasim was all but lost, and 'Abdullah made speed to return to Dar'iya to organise its defence against the coming storm: only stopping at Shaqra on the way to encourage its people to resist the invader to the utmost of their strength. The local Amir, Hamad ibn Yahya ibn Ghaihab, had indeed already put the citizens to work on the moat protecting the town, which had been begun to resist the advance of Tusun some two years earlier but had been left unfinished on the signing of the truce on that occasion. An ample supply of provisions and other requirements had also been laid in for a long siege by the imposition of a sort of forced levy on all the rich citizens, while even the palms along the moat were stripped of their large fronds to escape the effects of rifle-fire.

Ibrahim Pasha, having arranged for the security of 'Anaiza, proceeded to Buraida, where Hujailan, the Amir, and the citizens submitted without resistance. Thus the whole of the Qasim had fallen into his hands within a fortnight or three weeks of the collapse of the gallant resistance of Rass; and he was free to pursue his advance southwards. Taking the son of Hujailan and two other principal citizens of Buraida with him as hostages in accordance with his usual practice, he marched to Mudhnib, Ushaiqir and Fara'a in turn, all of which offered their submission on his appearance before their gates. Making Ushaiqir his base, he proceeded to reconnoitre Shaqra and its surroundings on January 24th, 1818, and to draw up his plan of attack on a town which, as he well knew, would resist to the utmost behind its strong fortifications. On the following day he began his attack from positions to the north and east of the oasis; and a stiff fight took place among the palm-groves and outside them, during which the Turks suffered heavy

casualties but brought up reinforcements to fill the gaps until the defenders were forced back into the town, with their Amir severely wounded.

Ibrahim now deployed his artillery to pound the walls from a commanding position on a knoll on the northern side; and the rumble of his cannonade was heard not only in the neighbouring province of Sudair and Majma'a but as far away as the 'Arma plateau. The inhabitants having now retired behind their walls, Ibrahim brought up his guns to close quarters and cut down large numbers of the surrounding palms; but the defenders fought back with determination from every possible vantage point among the shattered walls and buildings, and particularly in and about the moat which gave them protection against the rifle and gun fire. Day after day they ignored the Pasha's invitation to surrender on honourable terms: but the odds were heavily against the defenders, and on April 10th they offered their submission. The fall of Shaqra meant the capitulation of the rest of Washm; and Ibrahim sent a force under Rishwan Agha to subdue and ravage Sudair and Majma'a, where there was little or no opposition. Huraimila and Mahmal avoided the attentions of the Egyptian soldiery by sending in their submission to Ibrahim during his sojourn at Shaqra, which lasted about a month. During this period the Pasha was busy supervising the dismantling of what remained of the walls, and the filling in of the famous moat, while suspicions of possible disloyalty after his departure, sown in his mind by interested parties, gave rise to some harsh dealing with the wounded Amir and other principal citizens until the baselessness of the imputations against them was established. Nevertheless Ibrahim took ten citizens of the town with him as hostages when he eventually left Shaqra on his way to Dhurma.

Meanwhile 'Abdullah, anticipating this move, had sent reinforcements to strengthen Dhurma under his cousin Sa'ud ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and other commanders (Ibn 'Ufaisan and Muhammad al 'Umairi). And, when Ibrahim arrived in the neighbourhood on February 20th, he found the town forewarned and fully armed to resist his attack. He took up his position at the oasis of Muzahimiya, some miles to the east of Dhurma itself, and brought up his guns and siege machinery to batter the walls in accordance with the now familiar pattern of his tactics. Having thus softened the

defences, he launched his troops at the town in an effort to carry it by storm, but they were thrown back in confusion, with the loss of 600 men, by the stout defenders, who immediately set to work to repair parts of their shattered walls. Ibrahim now moved his artillery to another part of the fortifications, where Mit'ab ibn 'Ufaisan was in command with his troops from al Kharj. They stood up to the bombardment without flinching; but at this stage a shout was heard in their rear that the Turks had got behind them, with the open town at their mercy. They now retired fighting, while the Pasha's men followed up their retreat, entering the streets of the town from every direction while rain and bitter cold added to the discomfort of all concerned. The street fighting continued mercilessly until after sunrise, when Muhammad al 'Umairi, with a small contingent of his men from Thadiq, fought his way through the enemy's ranks and made good his escape, while the Egyptians pillaged the town and slew all they met with in the streets. Sa'ud ibn 'Abdullah himself, with about a hundred men from Dar'iya took refuge in one of the forts in the town, where they later surrendered on the offer of honourable terms by Ibrahim to depart in peace for Dar'iya. By this time most of the men of the town had fled into the desert, and Ibrahim was left to collect the booty and, incidentally, to round up the women and children, some 3,000 of them, whom he duly despatched under escort to Dar'iya, unharmed and unmolested.

Thus Dhurma, reputed to be the strongest town in Najd after Dar'iya itself, had fallen to Ibrahim only three or four days after the inception of his attack; and it is said that no fewer than 800 of its 1,200 male inhabitants had perished in the battle, in addition to lesser numbers among the reinforcements which had been sent to their help. Having thoroughly pillaged the empty town, Ibrahim drew off his army for the final stage of the campaign which had been entrusted to him by his father. Marching by way of the Haisiya pass and down Wadi Hanifa, past 'Ayaina and Jubaila, he reached and camped at the palm-groves of Malqa, about an hour's march by camel above Dar'iya itself. From there he conducted a reconnaissance in person down the valley as far as 'Ilb at the entrance of the oasis, accompanied by his staff and some guns in the valley itself, while his cavalry rode along the high ground on either bank. After a sharp skirmish here with 'Abdullah's outposts

he returned to Malqa, to complete his dispositions for the battle which was to begin the following day, March 11th, 1818.

As the districts and towns and villages of Najd fell one by one under the sway of the invader, there were always elements who rejected the idea of remaining in peace under alien, and virtually infidel, rule. These folk drifted down to swell the population and defences of the capital, and were suitably disposed by 'Abdullah to meet all the requirements of the situation. The Dar'iya oasis lay in the deep valley of Wadi Hanifa, some 500 yards wide on the average and extending about four miles from north to south, with dense palm-groves on either side of the flood channel to the 100-foot cliffs on both banks. In the groves lay a number of hamlets or villages occupied by the bulk of the permanent population, while above them towered the citadel of Turaif, perched on a projection of the cliff on the right bank and occupied by the palaces and mansions of the Sa'ud family and their retainers, the mosques and other amenities of an Arab town. The citadel was separated from the adjacent right bank by a deep gully, on the other side of which sprawled a suburb of mean huts and buildings in which lived the artisans and other folk of low degree. Outside this suburb a wall, dotted with towers and turrets, ran across the base of a wide eastward bulge of the wadi, while a similar and considerably longer wall followed the cliff line of the eastern or left bank of the valley in a shallow arc. Access to the main bulk of the oasis was restricted to the wadi bed from north and south, while occasional camel tracks descended to it from the cliffs on either side, the principal of these being the track leading to Riyadh.

Such was the setting of the scene on which was to be played out to the bitter end the tragedy of the Wahhabi struggle for existence against the greatest Power in Islam. On March 11th Ibrahim Pasha moved down the valley in full force, with his cavalry deployed in the desert on both sides, to set up his own headquarters at 'Ilb. Facing the Pasha in the wadi was the main body of yeomen from Dar'iya itself and other Najd settlements under the command of 'Abdullah's three brothers, Faisal, Ibrahim and Fahd, who had only three guns with which to confront the powerful artillery of the enemy. On their right, north-eastward, lay two other brothers, Sa'd and Turki, with their Dar'iya troops covering the mouth of Sha'ib Mughaisiba: while next to them was the Manfuha contingent under its chief,

'Abdullah ibn Mazru'. Between this defence line and the enemy the advanced guard comprised the Hariq contingent under Turki ibn 'Abdullah al Hazzani and other elements, covering the Samhan gate at the north end of the citadel, where 'Abdullah himself had taken up his position inside the wall with some heavy artillery. The hamlet of Qiri 'Amran, by the Rafi'a palm-grove, was held by Fahd ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz, 'Abdullah's first cousin, with contingents from Dar'iya and Sudair and some guns. All these positions formed the front line of defence, directly confronting the similar dispositions of the enemy, while behind them, right back to the lower end of the oasis, every strong-point, turret and ditch was manned by the grey-beards and other elements of the population unfit to bear the brunt of battle but capable of putting up a stout defence of their positions in case of need. And finally, lest the enemy might try a turning movement from the desert below the oasis, the hillock of Qurain was strongly held with artillery by another first cousin of 'Abdullah, named Sa'ud ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz.

On the right, or western, bank of the wadi, and in the front line of defence, 'Abdullah's uncle and namesake, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz, held the Samha fort with a mixed force: while next to him, and covering the mouth of Sha'ib al Hariqa, lay another brother of 'Abdullah, named 'Umar, with yet another brother, Hasan, continuing the line to where Turki and Zaid, sons of 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad, were in command of another Dar'iya contingent, covered on the flank by Faraj al Harbi, a former slave of the great Sa'ud, with a slave contingent. Farther upstream the mouth of Sha'ib Ghubaira was held by the above-mentioned Turki's son, Fahd, and his cousin, Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Mishari, whom we have already met as the commander of the Safa fort at 'Anaiza. Behind these positions, and still on the right bank, lay 'Abdullah's brother, Mishari, occupying the 'Id prayer-ground on the escarpment behind the western suburb, already mentioned. Next in order the banks of Sha'ib Safa were held by Sa'ud ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad to prevent any attempt of the enemy to come in by the rear on this side. This same prince also, as noted above, commanded the Qurain position covering the rear of the left-bank positions.

Ibrahim Pasha lost no time after his arrival at 'Ilb in launching

his attack on the Wahhabi front line; and the battle raged fiercely and without intermission for ten days without appreciable advantage to either side, in spite of two sharp hand-to-hand encounters at the mouths of Sha'ibs Mughaisiba and Hariqa on either flank of the wadi, in which the Wahhabis did the attacking. Ibrahim now broke off the battle and made his dispositions for an attack on the defence positions farthest north in the area of Wadi Ghubaira. His attack began at dawn, and he poured in reinforcements to keep the defenders busy, while he now brought in a strong cavalry detachment, which he had hidden in a side ravine overnight, to attack them from the rear. Taken by surprise, the Wahhabis retreated in considerable disorder down the valley, losing a hundred men, including the first casualties to be suffered by the royal family: Fahd ibn Turki and Muhammad ibn Hasan ibn Mishari being among the dead, as well as the Hazzani chief Husain. The survivors rallied on reaching their main front, on which the Turks failed to make any impression, though the gloom created at Dar'iya by this first disaster resulted in the desertion of certain lukewarm supporters of 'Abdullah's cause, who sought to curry favour with the Pasha by giving him information about the situation in the town.

A short while after his success at Ghubaira, Ibrahim despatched his regiment of cavalry with infantry elements drawn from the entrenched positions in the wadi to 'Ali Azan, commanding the forces on the right bank, with instructions to attack the Wahhabi position at the Samha fort. Meanwhile he ordered his left-bank troops to keep up a vigorous offensive against the forces in front of them to obviate any withdrawal of units in support of the main object of his attack. He then opened on the fort and its surroundings with his artillery, located in the wadi, until most of the fortifications were reduced to ruins; and 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz was compelled to abandon the position in favour of an entrenched line farther back. At this point 'Ali Azan launched his troops at the fort held by 'Umar, the brother of 'Abdullah, whose troops held out stoutly against every assault and in spite of vicious bombardment, until they were attacked in the rear by the force which had occupied the Samha fort. 'Umar's men broke and fled down the wadi where Ibrahim was now directing his main attack against the key positions held by Faisal ibn Sa'ud, who resisted vigorously until 'Ali

Azan sent the cavalry and infantry at his disposal down Sha'ibs Hariqa and Ghubaira into the wadi, where they lay up in the Ghaiyadhi palm-groves until the abandonment of his position by 'Umar ibn Sa'ud. They now worked round to the rear of the main positions of Faisal, whose troops were routed after a fierce fight, and fled leaving most of their guns and equipment behind, while the forces holding positions on both sides of the wadi also fled in panic.

The retreat was not stopped until Faisal and his brother, Sa'd, succeeded in rallying their men at the Salmani palm-grove, where the pursuing enemy was thrown back with considerable losses. But no attempt was made to recover the lost ground, and the Wahhabi forces remained where they had halted, to build up a new entrenched line by linking the positions of the various contingents with trenches and barriers across the width of the wadi at this point. The section including the bed of the valley was now held in strength by 'Abdullah's three brothers, Faisal, Turki and Fahd, and their uncle 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz. To their left, covering the right bank of the wadi, lay Ibrahim, another brother, while above him on the citadel platform was 'Abdullah's own son, Sa'd, with a big gun and a strong force, commanding a good view of the whole valley and dominating the battle. Farther upstream on the high banks of Sha'ib Ghubaira were posted Turki ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and his son, Faisal, who thus makes his first appearance on a stage on which he was yet to play the principal rôle for over thirty years. The Sha'ib Bulaida area was held in sections by 'Umar and Hasan, brothers of 'Abdullah, and the slave warrior Faraj al Harbi. And between this line and Sha'ib Katla lay yet another brother of 'Abdullah, named 'Abdul-Rahman, while the 'Id prayer-ground was held by Mishari ibn Sa'ud, also a brother of 'Abdullah. All these positions confronted corresponding positions of the enemy and were manned day and night without respite, while the posts downstream, already mentioned, were lightly held in case of need and were not concerned with the main developments of the battle. Above Salmani on the left bank the defence line was entrusted to 'Abdullah ibn Mazru' of Manfuha and 'Abdullah ibn Ibrahim ibn Hasan al Mishari, the latter being on the high ground of al Nadhira, on the summit of whose hillock stood a small stone-built fort garrisoned by one Sudaiyid al Lauh of Mahmal and

forming one of the key points of the defence. Between here and the line of Sha'ib Qulaiqil stood the force under Sa'd ibn Sa'ud, brother of 'Abdullah, while the Sha'ib itself was occupied by the Dughathir brothers, Ibrahim and 'Ali. 'Abdullah himself, accompanied by various chiefs and the leaders of the ecclesiastical body, was stationed at and between the two gates, Samhan and Dhahra, occupying tents near a battery of heavy guns.

Ibrahim Pasha now advanced his own headquarters to the ravine of Qiri Qusair close to the town on the north side, while 'Ali Azan took up positions along the right bank confronting the citadel from the west. And the battle raged with the same intensity as before, day and night, with frequent hand-to-hand encounters to vary the unremitting artillery bombardment. On the whole the defenders had the best of the close fighting, but the enemy had a great superiority of numbers and was always able to fill the gaps caused by the severe casualties sustained, while he was constantly receiving reinforcements and stores from distant Madina. The defenders on the other hand suffered a constant drain on their numbers and on their material.

The fighting raged in the main round a number of vital points of the defence, such as the Salmani grove and the ruins of the Samha fort, as well as in Sha'ib Bulaida on the right bank of the wadi and in Sha'ib Qulaiqil on the left. The enemy cavalry now circumvented the town area to attack the village of 'Arqa some miles below Dar'iya, which they captured and destroyed, while the surviving inhabitants fled up the valley to the capital; but 'Abdullah reoccupied the village at the season of date harvest to protect and garner in the crop. The Pasha countered with another attack on the garrison, with the help of the Amir of Riyadh, Nasir al 'Aidhi, and elements from there and Manfuha and other Najd villages, which had thrown in their lot with the enemy. The village in due course surrendered on terms and the garrison proceeded to Dar'iya; but during the course of this conflict Ibrahim Pasha suffered a serious disaster when one of his large ammunition dumps exploded, destroying immense quantities of war material and causing much loss of life among the troops in the neighbourhood, to say nothing of a more general panic created by the incident, of which the Wahhabis took advantage to attack the enemy, though unavailingly. To make good some of his losses the Pasha

now sent detachments far and wide over the country, commandeering all stocks of ammunition and such sums of money as could be found, while the Turks in 'Iraq and elsewhere organised convoys to keep the expeditionary force fully supplied with all its requirements. Thus the enemy's strength grew from day to day, and defections among the defenders of Dar'iya became more and more frequent, until even Ghassab, the 'Ataiba chief, always reckoned as one of the stoutest supporters of the Sa'ud dynasty, went over to the enemy, and was able to give the Pasha important information and advice regarding the dispositions and routine of the defence, in which he had held the post of commander of the cavalry.

It was about this time, in April 1818, that the Wahhabi cause suffered a severe loss in the death of 'Abdullah's brother, Faisal, who was killed by a stray bullet or by a sharp-shooter at long range while going the rounds of his command. His place was taken by his brother, Turki, and the weary round of battles pursued its course without respite: now at one point and now at another. After fights in Sha'ib Katla and Qiri 'Amran, a particularly heavy engagement developed round the palm-grove of Rafi'a, when the Dughathir brothers and their following delivered a strong attack on the enemy's mortars, but were repulsed with heavy losses including two members of the Dughathir family. A second battle on the same site resulted from an attack by the Pasha with a strong force on the entrenchments of the Wahhabis, from which the Egyptians were thrown back and pursued by Fahd ibn 'Abdullah, who was however killed in the ensuing conflict when the enemy stood his ground. Sorties from Dar'iya maintained the pressure on the Turks, and the battle raged from sunrise to mid-day without appreciable advantage to either side. The defenders however now began to feel the pinch of famine, as their supplies ran out and the price of wheat rose to unheard-of heights. Many people left the town for this reason, and it was clear that the sands were running out for 'Abdullah and his folk.

On October 5th Ibrahim Pasha delivered a sustained assault on the defences of the town from every direction. A force with some guns was sent for the first time to the downstream end of the oasis to overawe the weakest spots in the defence, while a very strong force under 'Ali Azan was posted on the right bank, threatening the citadel from the west. A strong attack was now

delivered against the left bank positions to draw away as many of the defenders as possible in that direction, while 'Ali Azan deployed his force at dawn for an attack on the defence position of 'Abdul-Rahman, another brother of 'Abdullah, just above the Mushairifa palm-grove. Finding the position deserted, the force entered the palm-grove and made openings in the retaining wall along the flood channel to await its turn to join in the fray, which was now developing on both banks of the Wadi. The defenders were too busy resisting the units directly opposed to them to notice what was happening in their rear, until the Mushairifa force struck at them from behind. They fled in panic from their trenches, pursued by the enemy, and scattered to their homes in the villages of the valley, barricading their doors and manning their walls against the pursuers. 'Abdullah's son, Sa'd, with a number of the principal citizens, took refuge in his grandfather's castle in Turaif, against which Ibrahim now employed his guns and mortars. 'Abdullah himself, with his companions, was still at his post between the two gates, while in the valley the people of the villages fought back bravely, though hopelessly, in a situation which had got entirely out of control.

'Abdullah, whose brother Ibrahim had been killed in the earlier fighting, now realised that all was virtually lost, and retired to his mansion in Turaif, abandoning his guns and equipment between the two gates to the enemy. A deputation headed by his uncle, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz, and Shaikh 'Ali, a son of the great Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, waited on Ibrahim Pasha to sue for peace; but their request was granted only in respect of the villages of the valley to the exclusion of the citadel, unless 'Abdullah should appear in person to surrender unconditionally. So a separate truce, applicable only to the oasis villages, was agreed to on honourable terms for the villagers on September 9th, 1818, while the now completely encircled citadel became the scene of some of the fiercest fighting of the battle: the mansions of the House of Sa'ud being bombarded by the enemy from the same Samhan gate, which had served as 'Abdullah's own headquarters from the first day of the battle. He now brought out the guns in his palace to the mosque for a last throw with fate, in which he was joined by a large number of loyal citizens. And for two days he kept up the hopeless fight against overwhelming odds,

before deciding to surrender on September 11th, after exactly six months of resistance against all the might and resources of the Sublime Porte and its Egyptian Viceroy. Peace was made on the condition that 'Abdullah himself should proceed to Constantinople to hear the Sultan's decision as to his fate. And two days later he left his capital under a strong escort commanded by Rishwan Agha and 'Ali Duwaidar, to pass *via* Egypt to Constantinople, where he was executed by the Sultan's command.

Ibrahim Pasha's expedition to Arabia had cost the Turks some 12,000 men in killed alone, of whom it is estimated that 10,000 fell in the fighting for Dar'iyā. But so complete a victory was cheap at the price; and the power of the Wahhabis lay shattered at the feet of the Ottoman Empire: potentially for ever, had not the subsequent incompetence of the Turkish military administration dissipated all the advantages gained in the campaign, and fostered in the conquered territories a spirit of discontent which could only find effective expression in loyalty to the surviving princes of the house of Sa'ud. Many of these had fled from Dar'iyā before the final tragedy, while many more were carried off into captivity in Egypt, whence some of them were to return in due course to play a part in their country's service. Among the former was 'Abdullah's first cousin once removed, Sa'ud ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad, who was however pursued and killed by Ibrahim's cavalry. But his brother, Turki, did make good his escape, and was destined to play a considerable part in restoring Sa'udi prestige during the ensuing chaotic decade of Turkish occupation. And another brother, Zaid, accompanied Turki into the desert though the latter's son, Faisal, was among the members of the Sa'udi family who were deported by Ibrahim to Egypt.

The total casualties suffered by the Wahhabi defenders of Dar'iyā are given as about 1,300 killed, including three brothers of 'Abdullah and eighteen other members of the royal family. And incidentally no fewer than ten of 'Abdullah's brothers, as well as one of his three sons, had taken an active part in the defence of the Wahhabi capital during the six months of the siege. The Mu'ammār family, formerly princes of 'Ayaina, contributed fifteen members to the roll of honour, in which also six members of the Dughaiṭhir family were included. And every contingent of the provinces which took part in the battle

contributed a substantial quota of dead to the list. The Wahhabi Empire had indeed gone down fighting to the last, and was destined to rise again in due course from its ashes in the turmoil which ensued upon its temporary extinction.

So far as we know, Ibrahim Pasha treated all members of the Sa'ud family with the honour due to their rank and record. But it was otherwise with many of their supporters, and in particular with the members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Some were executed by firing-squads, while others were blown to pieces from the muzzles of guns and mortars. The Qadhi of Madina, Ahmad al Hanbali, who happened to be at Dar'iya during the siege, was beaten and tortured before having all his teeth extracted: while Sulaiman ibn 'Abdullah, a grandson of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, was subjected to the ignominy of listening to the guitar as a preliminary to being conducted to the cemetery and executed by a firing squad. Another grandson of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, named 'Ali ibn Husain, managed to escape like treatment by flight to Qatar and 'Uman, whence he was to return after some years to serve under Turki.

Ibrahim's reign of terror lasted some nine months after the fall of Dar'iya, whose final and utter destruction under the express orders of Muhammad 'Ali himself in June, 1919, set the seal on a victory which he had richly earned by his tenacity, his organising ability, his skilful tactics and his political acumen.

Turki ibn Sa'ud

THE collapse of the Wahhabi leadership, based as it was on religious and moral sanctions which had won the respect of the people, if not always their unreserved devotion, had resulted naturally enough, though with somewhat surprising rapidity, in the relaxation of the disciplines which had rescued the Arabs from the virtual barbarism of pre-Wahhabi times. The old tribal and parochial jealousies and rivalries resumed their sway over the country with the open or covert connivance of its new masters, who were in no wise interested in promoting the welfare of the people or the reconstruction of an economy which had been shattered by the war. On the contrary, Ibrahim's immediate and deliberate object was to strike terror into the hearts of the people, and to impose upon them the utmost exactions required for the maintenance of his troops in their scattered garrison posts, while destroying all possible local means of resistance to their tyranny. The voice of reason, let alone religion, was heard no more in the land. Travel between village and village was too dangerous to be attempted, while even in the towns respectable citizens could not move without escorts. Backbiting and false accusations became the order of the day; and the Egyptians, dealing one by one with their helpless and incoherent victims, had no difficulty in appropriating their belongings and the produce of their harvests for the benefit of the army, while they destroyed all walls and buildings likely to shelter resistance to their merciless exactions and cruelties.

What with these heavy demands on local resources, and the destruction of palm-groves and growing crops during and after the war, famine conditions inevitably supervened. It is difficult to believe the story that the Egyptian troops were at times reduced to eating grass; but it is more than probable that their unfortunate victims had such experiences. And there does not seem to be on record any single administrative act designed to improve the lot of the people, or increase the productivity of

the occupied territories, to say nothing of their security, during the half-dozen years which separated the fall of Dar'iyā from the departure of the Egyptian garrisons (or the last of them) from the country. It is not indeed unlikely that this omission was part of the deliberate policy of Muhammad 'Ali, who was prepared to leave the Arabian desert to its endemic anarchy so long as it refrained from encroaching seriously on the Red Sea provinces, which were vital to the interests and prestige of the Ottoman Empire. And neither he nor indeed anyone else could possibly have imagined that the Wahhabi State would re-emerge within less than a decade from the chaos in which his son had left Arabia.

It is true that Ibrahim Pasha seems to have flirted with the idea of extending Turkish rule to the Persian Gulf, where soon after the fall of Dar'iyā the brothers Majid and Muhammad of the principal Bani Khalid family of Ibn 'Arai'ar, whose father had been ruler of al Ahsa, made a partially successful bid to re-established their ascendancy. Hufhuf and Qatif acknowledged them; but they were not to enjoy their independence for long. Ibrahim sent a small force under his lieutenant, Muhammad Kashif, to take possession of all funds and property belonging to the fallen Sa'ud family and its adherents. The 'Arai'ar pretenders and the chief of the Siyasib tribe fled; and the Turks, perpetrating atrocities on all connected with the Sa'uds or the Wahhabi religion, remained in control of al Ahsa until Ibrahim was ready to depart from Arabia. The decision to evacuate al Ahsa is presumably to be attributed to Muhammad 'Ali himself, and was obviously of great interest and importance to Great Britain, whose agents and troops had been busy during the previous two decades in creating a chain of imperial assets, which still maintain their grip, considerably extended in the interval, over the Arabian littoral after the lapse of a century and a half.

The details of British activities in this area scarcely belong to the domestic history of Sa'udi Arabia; but it is difficult to believe that the landing of a considerable force of British troops at Qatif just before or during Muhammad Kashif's occupation (reported by some authorities though not confirmed from any official source) was really intended to be a demonstration of cooperation with the Turks. Their establishment on the Hasa coast would clearly have been an indirect challenge to the

British position on the 'Pirate Coast', where the Turks were technically entitled to the Wahhabi inheritance. On the other hand it was of importance to the British to ascertain the intentions of Ibrahim Pasha and his father in respect of the Gulf coast; and Captain G. F. Sadlier's historic journey across Arabia in the summer of 1819 was clearly designed to serve this purpose. Why, if a large British force was actually available at Qatif, the opportunity was missed of establishing British control over the whole of the Gulf coast (up to Kuwait which was of little importance at the time) must be written off as a mystery for which there seems to be no explanation. It may be that the return of Majid ibn 'Arai'ar and his brother to al Ahsa after the departure of the Turks was from the British point of view a satisfactory compromise pending possible developments of the situation: which did not in fact materialise.

On the arrival of Muhammad 'Ali's orders for the destruction of Dar'iya and a general evacuation of the country after dealing suitably with the walls and fortifications of all towns and villages, Ibrahim Pasha began to draw in his scattered contingents to a rendezvous near Dhurma, whither he proceeded after a sojourn of nine months at the Wahhabi capital. During his month at Dhurma, he staged a number of raids, probably little more than foraging expeditions, against Subai', 'Ajman and 'Anaza elements; in one of which he had a narrow escape from a dagger thrust, which slit his trouser-cord and saddle and grievously wounded his horse. He then proceeded to the Qasim, and in due course to Madina, carrying with him Hujailan, the aged governor of the province, who died there at the age of over eighty. Meanwhile Ibrahim's Aghas, before leaving their posts to join him, seem to have indulged in atrocities designed to remove for ever persons of distinction, who might have helped in the regeneration of a ruined country. The Amir of Hail, Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin ibn 'Ali, and his brother, 'Ali, as also the Amir of 'Anaiza, 'Abdullah ibn Rashid, were seized and killed in cold blood. The 'Ufaisan family at Dilam in al Kharj suffered even worse at the hands of the Agha returning from Hauta, Husain Jaukhdar by name, who broke his journey to slay three of its chiefs and confiscate all their property. 'Ali ibn 'Abdullah, a grandson of Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab and a man of great learning was also killed at this time in the neighbourhood of Dar'iya.

The internecine quarrels and intrigues and murders ensuing upon Ibrahim's departure from the Qasim at Buraida, Huraimila and other places were but islets of horror in the main stream of events which soon began to emerge from the prevailing chaos. The return of the 'Arai'ar brothers to their traditional position in al Ahsa, soon to be strengthened by their arrest and disposal of Saif ibn Sa'dun, the Siyasib chief, has already been mentioned; and it was unlikely that they would rest content with their ancestral domain now that the vacant throne of Dar'iya invited competition. A more serious claimant to that however was the former princely house of 'Ayaina, which had long since been absorbed into the Wahhabi realm: and whose leading representative at this time, Muhammad ibn Mishari ibn Mu'ammār, had been at Dar'iya during the siege and had only left it to return to 'Ayaina on its destruction by Ibrahim Pasha. In September 1819 he proceeded to Dar'iya to proclaim himself as Imam and ruler of all Najd in the place of the vanished Sa'uds, and to invite support for his claim. Meeting with a modest response from areas well disposed towards him, he took steps to repair some of the ruins of the town, though his efforts to restore prosperity in the districts under his control were seriously hindered by a winter drought and consequent famine conditions, following the abnormal rains and floods of the previous July (1819).

Opposition to his rule was not long in declaring itself, especially among the people of Riyadh, Huraimila and al Kharj, who invited Majid ibn 'Arai'ar to join them in expelling the usurper before he could establish himself. His principal ally, Manfuha, was attacked by the confederates; but inconclusive fighting was followed by a truce, and Ibn Mu'ammār appeased Majid with presents and assurances that he had no intention of challenging his position in the Hasa: and informing him at the same time that his rule in Najd was in the name of the Ottoman Sultan! It may well have been that some arrangement of this kind had been vaguely contemplated in conversation with Ibrahim, who seems to have treated him with friendly consideration. However, whatever may have been Majid's reaction to his presents and assurances, it was the Badawin who decided the issue, and Majid returned home disappointed. Ibn Mu'ammār was able to extend and consolidate his influence in the countryside, which took advantage of the high prices of

foodstuffs at the capital to send their caravans to Dar'iya to sell their produce at a profit to themselves.

Riyadh, Huraimila and al Kharj still withheld recognition of his rule, with Huraimila apparently assuming the leadership of the dissentient elements, whose hostility was however more than counterbalanced by the sudden and somewhat surprising appearance from the desert of no less a person than Turki ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'ud with his brother Zaid: with assurances of loyalty and support. Thus encouraged, and at the same time receiving an invitation to intervene on their behalf from some of the folk of Huraimila, he promised active support to the latter in the event of their organising a rising against the local chief, Hamad ibn Râshid. Ibn Mu'ammâr now sent his son, Mishari, and Turki's brother, Zaid, with a force which attracted reinforcements on its way through Mahmal and Sudair, to help his friends; and after a week's siege in his fort Hamad ibn Râshid surrendered on terms and was taken to Dar'iya. The occupation of Huraimila hastened the submission of most towns and villages in al 'Aridh, Washm and Sudair, whose leaders declared their loyalty to the new régime either in person or by letter.

These operations took place about the beginning of March 1820; but at the end of the same month Ibn Mu'ammâr's position was shaken by the totally unexpected arrival at Dar'iya of Mishari ibn Sa'ud, one of the many brothers of the ill-fated 'Abdullah, who could at least claim the allegiance of the people as a legitimate heir to the dynastic honours. He had made his escape from the escort conducting him towards exile in Egypt from a place between Madina and Yanbu', and returned to the Qasim, where and at Zilfi and at Tharmida he had collected sufficient support to justify his bold bid for the throne. Ibn Mu'ammâr was not unnaturally annoyed, but refrained from any overt act of hostility, and even pledged his loyalty to the new Imam, who also received the usual visits of congratulation and allegiance from the provinces, including Riyadh and Huraimila, Mahmal and Sudair and Washm. The immediate adhesion of Turki ibn 'Abdullah was perhaps his most important gain, while his uncle, 'Umar, and his three sons, also joined him, as also did two members of the Mishari branch of the family, Hasan ibn Muhammad and Mishari ibn Nasir: all these having escaped from Dar'iya before its fall.

Mishari's first concern was to bring the hitherto recalcitrant province of al Kharj to heel. Sulaimiya and Yamama seem to have resisted for a while, but soon surrendered, whereupon the local Amir, al Bijadi, was dismissed from his post. Dilam yielded with a better grace; and Mishari returned to Dar'iya to find that Ibn Mu'ammār had retired to Sadus on a pretext of ill health; a transparent cloak for his real motive, which was to head a revolt against Mishari. The chief of Huraimila welcomed his design and invited him to the town, which became his headquarters while he recruited a force for action. Faisal al Duwish and his Mutair tribesmen formed the bulk of the latter, while other local elements joined him in a surprise attack on the capital, which he entered without opposition; proceeding at once to Mishari's palace. Mishari was seized and thrown into prison, while Ibn Mu'ammār, leaving his son in charge of the capital, proceeded to Riyadh to arrest Turki ibn 'Abdullah and other members of the family. They had however fled at his approach, and he occupied the town without opposition, while other localities hastened to tender their submission. Mishari's short-lived reign was over, and Ibn Mu'ammār ruled the land once more: this time with Turkish recognition, as he hastened to inform Abush Pasha, who had recently arrived at 'Anaiza with a force, that he was not only acting in the interests of the Ottoman authorities, but that he also had Mishari in prison to be handed over to them at a convenient moment.

Meanwhile Turki ibn 'Abdullah, with a small following, had gone to Dhurma on some business of his own. This was reported to Ibn Mu'ammār, who immediately sent his son Mishari (now governor of Riyadh) with an adequate force to seize him. Turki however captured his messenger to the folk of Dhurma, and made himself safe from immediate danger by occupying one of the forts of the village. From this he made a sortie by night, and captured a house in which were a number of Ibn Mu'ammār's adherents, who at first fled as best they could, but later placed themselves at Turki's disposal. Mishari ibn Mu'ammār fled on horseback with a few followers, while Turki remained at Dhurma, receiving substantial support from the Subai' tribe and the southern districts. In December 1920 he marched on Dar'iya, where with local help he seized the person of Muhammad ibn Mu'ammār, while later he also secured the latter's son, Mishari, at Riyadh. Both were promised immediate freedom

on the release of Mishari ibn Sa'ud, who was still in prison at Sadus: but the people of the village, where a Turkish force had just arrived in company with Faisal al Duwish, were afraid to obey the orders of Ibn Mu'ammār, and Mishari ibn Sa'ud was handed over to the Turks as previously promised by Ibn Mu'ammār himself. The latter and his son were promptly put to death by Turki, while Mishari ibn Sa'ud himself died soon after his arrival at 'Anaiza, with nothing to show that Abush Agha was in any way responsible for his demise.

The Turks, with Faisal al Duwish, made an abortive attack on Riyadh, after which they staged a demonstration in force northwards and westwards, imposing heavy exactions on the people of Thadiq, Sudair and Washm, while Abush Agha behaved similarly in the Qasim. With their return chaos resumed its sway, and we hear of the renewal of internecine animosities in many districts, while economic conditions were worsened by a great plague of locusts. During the winter of 1820/1 the army of occupation was reinforced by the arrival of Husain Bey and his troops to take over the chief command in Najd. He immediately marched down to Washm, whence Abush Agha was sent to attack Riyadh with a mixed force of Turks and local levies from various towns and tribes: including some principal persons who had been banished from Riyadh and Huraimila by Ibn Mu'ammār. Turki prepared to resist the attack; but the people of Riyadh had no stomach for more fighting, and Abush entered the town without opposition. Turki retired to his castle with some seventy retainers to stand a siege; but the odds were too heavy for him, and he escaped alone by night, leaving his men to surrender next morning. They were all slain in cold blood, with the exception of 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz and his three sons, who were sent to Egypt to join their other relatives in exile.

Husain Bey now arrived on the scene, imposing heavy fines on both Riyadh and Manfuha, while the folk settled at Dar'iya by Ibn Mu'ammār were ordered to leave at once and were conducted to Tharmida, where they were hospitably received by Khalil Agha, the officer in command. They were promised land wherever they wished to settle, and then held in detention, to be butchered in due course on the orders of Husain Bey on his return from Riyadh, where also he had had several persons put to death and their properties destroyed or confiscated. This

was but the beginning of his reign of terror in Najd. Military contingents posted in the Qasim, Sudair, Mahmal, Washm and other localities robbed, pillaged and persecuted the people to such an extent that large numbers fled into the desert, while their property was destroyed. Even women and children were not immune from their atrocities; and the tale of destruction and death in almost every part of Najd scarcely ended with the departure of Husain Bey about the end of the year. He had left a legacy of internecine strife, which continued to ravage the provinces, particularly the always turbulent areas of Sudair and Majma'a, and to some extent in 'Aridh and the Qasim. And the horrors of the year were crowned by a virulent outbreak of cholera, emanating from India and sweeping into Arabia by way of the Persian Gulf and 'Iraq.

Sudair was again in the forefront of the disturbances which marked the year 1821/2, while Manfuha and Buraida also had their share of tribulation. But perhaps the principal event of the year was the arrival at Rass of a new Turkish commander, Hasan abu Dhahir, who proclaimed that he had come to subdue the Badawin in the interests of the townsfolk. He certainly earned the gratitude of the country by ordering the release of the many hostages detained in the fort at Tharmida under the orders of his predecessor; and the people of the Qasim sent him assurances of their loyalty, as also did Majma'a and the villages of Sudair. But the despatch of an expedition under Musa Kashif to the latter provinces to make the now familiar exactions soon created a *détente*, and the Turks took to more violent methods to make their wishes understood. Various towns were pillaged, and persons of high standing arrested and killed. Musa Kashif himself was killed in a battle with the Suhul, whom he had raided. His brother, Ibrahim, was at the same time sent down to Washm and Riyadh, which he made his headquarters, while showing the flag as far south as Kharj. Meanwhile Hasan Bey himself had paid a visit to Jabal Shammar: demanding the payment of all taxes due since the departure of Ibrahim Pasha, and imposing further demands when that claim had been met. The resistance of Mauqaq to these exactions was duly punished by the killing of most of its people on their surrender after a short siege. About the same time in the south Ibrahim led a strong force to raid the Subai' tribe in the neighbourhood of Ha'ir; but the tribesmen resisted strongly and

utterly defeated the Turks and their allies from Riyadh and elsewhere. Ibrahim himself and some 300 of his Turks were killed, while Nasir al 'Aidhi, the chief of Riyadh, escaped from the action, but was tracked down and slain in a cave in which he was sheltering.

Now Turki ibn 'Abdullah, after his escape from Riyadh, had been lying low in the Hauta district, while the Turks pursued their dreary task of collecting taxes and directing punitive expeditions against recalcitrant villages and tribes. In May 1823 however, during the month of Ramdhan, he emerged from his hiding with a small following of only thirty men, and reached the village of 'Arqa in Wadi Hanifa between Dar'iya and Riyadh, where he settled down for a while, feeling the pulse of the country. The first to welcome his reappearance on the scene and to offer him support was the chief of Shaqra, Hamad ibn Yahya ibn Ghaihab, while Turki also sent his cousin, Mishari ibn Nasir ibn Mishari ibn Sa'ud, to Suwaiyid, the chief of Jalajil in Sudair, who had in the previous year had a brush with the Turks, inviting him to join him with as many men as he could adequately arm. On their arrival Turki raised the standard of revolt and marched on Riyadh, then garrisoned by a Turkish force under Abu 'Ali al Bahluli al Maghrabi. The attempt however failed, and Suwaiyid and his men lost heart and returned home, leaving Turki with but a handful of supporters. The Turks and their allies now took the offensive against him, and besieged him in 'Arqa, though without success; and desultory hostilities dragged on until September, when Turki, leaving a small force at 'Arqa, attacked and captured the key town of Dhurma by a show of personal gallantry and courage, which greatly appealed to the imagination of the Arabs.

Meanwhile Hasan abu Dhahir, having returned from his expedition to Hail, was beginning to find himself in difficulties in the Qasim owing to the resentment caused by his frequent demands on the resources of the people. The imprisonment of the pro-Turkish governor of 'Anaiza, 'Abdullah al Jama'i, and other leaders provoked a revolt against him, until he was forced to surrender on terms, and agreed to withdraw his troops, including those at Tharmida, to Madina. He did however leave a small detachment in the Safa fort of 'Anaiza, which also surrendered before long and followed him out of the country, where now the only Turkish forces remaining were the garrisons

at Riyadh and Manfuha, already involved in hostilities with Turki. Meanwhile Majid ibn 'Arai'ar appeared to be secure enough in his domination of the Hasa province, which the Turks apparently had no desire to re-enter, while Turki had more pressing problems to think of than the future of the Persian Gulf provinces. Nevertheless, at about this time, Majid was confronted by a challenge from Faisal al Duwish, an old ally of the Turks, with a mixed force of Mutair and 'Ajman tribesmen; and the resulting battle of Rudhaima in the 'Arma plateau ended in a severe defeat of the Bani Khalid, though Faisal was not in a position to follow up his victory.

Serious trouble had again broken out in the Sudair province, the details of which are of less concern than the fact that in July Turki ibn 'Abdullah left Dhurma for Thadiq to intervene in the matter. His summons to the rival parties to cease their strife in the interests of the common weal had an immediate effect; and the chiefs of the towns and villages of Sudair hastened to declare their loyalty to him. With a force recruited from the people of Mahmal he proceeded to Jalajil, the main centre of the trouble, and was loyally welcomed by its people. Majma'a hesitated however to adhere to his cause, but soon thought better of the matter when he appeared to lay siege to it with a large force. Mazyad, the ruling chief, was dismissed in favour of Muhammad ibn Saqr, a leading citizen of 'Ammariya, who was provided with a garrison to hold the fort, while the people of the town hastened to take the oath of allegiance to a Sa'ud once more, albeit not of the direct line which had ruled in Najd hitherto. He remained at Majma'a about a month, reorganising the administration of the province and its neighbours, while Ghat and Zilfi, Shaqra and other villages of Washm sent their representatives to do homage. While here he also found and appropriated the tents and other paraphernalia which the Turks had left behind during their last expedition to the province; and, as soon as he had organised a suitable force out of the local elements available, he marched on Huraimila, which had shown no signs of anxiety to re-enter the Sa'udi fold. With all ready for an assault in force, including scaling-ladders, he sent a warning to the Amir of the town, Hamad ibn Rashid, that if he did not come out to do homage before the setting of the moon he and his men would meet him in the midst of the town.

Hamad surrendered, and was not only honourably received but confirmed in his post, and left in undisturbed possession of all his family property. Turki now, with a Huraimila contingent added to his force, descended on distant Manfuha, which surrendered without opposition: the local Amir, Ibrahim ibn Mazru', appearing in person to make his submission, while the small Turkish garrison was expelled to join that of Riyadh, which now, in August 1824, became the immediate object of Turki's attention. The Amir, Hamad al 'Aidhi, who had succeeded to the post on the death of his brother Nasir at Hair, was in no mood to surrender, and some fighting took place around the town with casualties on both sides. Turki then ordered his troops to gather in the date harvest for their own use under the eyes of the helpless garrison. He raised the siege however after about a month on the appearance of Faisal al Duwish with a large force of Mutair in support of the garrison, and retired to 'Arqa: only to return and press the siege more vigorously as soon as the Badawin had departed after a short stay in the neighbourhood.

In due course the Turkish commander sued for peace, and terms of surrender were arranged on the basis of the final departure of the Turks to Madina. Mishari ibn Nasir was appointed governor of Riyadh, while Turki himself proceeded to Tharmida and Shaqra to make sure that the Turks should not be tempted to remain there in defiance of their undertaking to quit the country. While at Shaqra he received deputations and messages from 'Anaiza and the rest of the Qasim, pledging their loyalty; and when the Turks had passed through Washm on their way to Madina, he returned to Riyadh, which from now on became the capital of Najd.

On the fall of Riyadh the people of Hauta and Hariq had sent deputations to pledge their loyalty to the new régime; and with the adhesion since then of the Qasim and Washm, Turki found himself in control of all Najd, with the sole exception of the Kharj province, whose present chiefs had formerly been banished by the Sa'udi rulers and had only returned after the fall of Dar'iya. He was evidently however in no hurry to deal with elements which could scarcely do him any harm; and it was not till May 1825 that he took steps to bring al Kharj to heel. The Amir of Dilam, Zaqm ibn Zamil, made a show of resistance, but soon offered to surrender on a guarantee of his

own safety and that of his adherents. This was easily arranged, and Turki took possession of the fort and all its military equipment, while Zaqm was sent to Riyadh to be a guest of the government. Sulaimiya and Yamama then submitted without serious resistance; and Turki was free to return to his new capital with the satisfying knowledge that the whole of Najd was now free of foreign control and back in the Sa'udi fold. At no time since his first arrival at 'Arqa had he had adequate material resources at his disposal; and his complete success within so short a period must for the most part be attributed to his personality: a combination of magnetic charm and compelling authority, to say nothing of the aura of heroism created by his personal bravery. It is said that the Imam Sa'ud had wished him to succeed him on the throne, but had been overruled by Turki himself, who never failed in his loyalty to 'Abdullah and was admittedly the life and soul of the defence of Dar'iya. And, as we have seen already, he was prepared to serve Ibn Mu'ammār and Mishari in turn in the interests of the country. Part of Turki's success must however be credited to the signal failure of the Turks to make good, their substitution of violence and tyranny for administration, and the weariness of the people of Najd of the chaos and anarchy which they had so readily welcomed at first as a respite from Wahhabi discipline.

Turki's reign in Najd may be regarded as having begun with his arrival at 'Arqa in May 1823, and to have become fully effective with the surrender of the Turkish garrison of Riyadh in October 1824, when he began the programme of reconstruction associated with his name by repairing the walls and building the palace and great mosque, which were to stand, as the principal architectural features of his capital, until they were demolished after 1950 to make way for larger and more modern structures. Apart from such activities, he had much to do in restoring effective administration to the districts and provinces of his realm: appointing as governors and Qadhis persons who could be relied upon to impose the law and keep the peace without fear or favour. The province of al Kharj was allotted to 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan, many members of whose family had been slain at Dilam by the Turks on their final withdrawal. And the escape from Egypt and arrival at Riyadh of a cousin of his own generation, Mishari ibn 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Mishari ibn Sa'ud, provided a convenient excuse for placing the rival town

of Manfuha under a senior member of the royal family. Mishari was scarcely to prove worthy of the confidence and consideration of Turki, but the latter could not have had any misgivings on the subject at this stage. Another important arrival from Egypt at this time was the Shaikh Abdul-Rahman ibn Hasan, a grandson of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, who was appointed to the office of Qadhi of Riyadh: a post he was destined to occupy for many years and eventually to share with his son and pupil, 'Abdul-Latif. Both father and son played a principal part in the restoration of religion as an effective element in the life of the Arabs, though it would seem that Wahhabism never quite reached the heights of fanaticism which had marked the heyday of the Dar'iya régime. It was a political rather than a religious urge that recreated in large part the Sa'udi empire during the reigns of Turki and Faisal, though the religious foundations of their politics were never very far below the surface. But it would not be till the second decade of the twentieth century that religious zeal would again completely dominate the life of the Arabs, and dictate the pattern of the third Wahhabi empire.

Turki seems to have been in no hurry to extend the frontiers of his realm at this period; and it is not until the winter season of 1826/7 that we find him organising an expedition against the Bani Khalid, who had crossed the Dahna and settled down at the wells of Hafar al 'Atk. The command of the expedition was entrusted to Mishari ibn 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Hasan ibn Mishari ibn Sa'ud, who is described by Ibn Bishr as his cousin (uncle's son), and who was slightly wounded in a completely successful encounter with the Badawin. It is not clear whether this Mishari was the same person as the Mishari ibn 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Mishari ibn Sa'ud, who was appointed governor of Manfuha the previous year by Turki, whom Ibn Bishr describes as his maternal uncle. The point is perhaps of little importance, except that it shows how complicated these Sa'udi genealogies can be, with their constant repetition of the same names: and this is particularly true of the Mishari branch of the family.

This same year was marked by drought and famine conditions, which caused the death of considerable numbers in the provinces of al Qasim and Sudair, to the latter of which a new governor had been appointed, namely Muhammad ibn

'Abdullah of Dhurma. Of more importance however was the death of the celebrated Persian Gulf pirate, Rahma ibn Jabir, in a naval engagement in the course of a campaign organised against him by Majid ibn 'Arai'ar, with substantial assistance from the rulers of Bahrain and Qatif. His son Bishr, left in charge of his headquarters fort at Dammam, was soon afterwards besieged and forced to surrender. Rahma had been a friend and active ally of the Sa'uds before the disaster of Dar'iya: so Majid's position as the ruler of the Hasa province was greatly strengthened by his death.

Desultory raids in Washm and elsewhere varied Turki's otherwise uneventful régime of reconstruction, while the hopes of a bumper harvest as the result of good rains in the autumn of 1826 were disappointed by the continuance of heavy showers in the following April, when grain and straw rotted on the threshing-floors, while the ripening dates during that summer were attacked by a pest which practically ruined the crop. These unfavourable agricultural conditions continued on a somewhat reduced scale during the following year, when Turki had to deal with another threatened encroachment on his territory by the Bani Khalid. The wells of Hafar al 'Atk and Umm al Jamajim were filled in on his orders by Ibn 'Abdan, the governor of Sudair, though it seems that the Arabs had no difficulty in re-excavating them, while Turki had to deal with an 'Ajman incursion nearer home at Baban (perhaps Banban or the 'Arma pass of Bâban close by). The year is described by the Najdi historian as a year of blessings and good news, though in the main the happiness of the country would rather seem to have lain in the fact that it had no history to be recorded.

It is true that the visit of the Jabal Shammar ruler, 'Isa ibn 'Ali, to Riyadh to do homage to Turki and place his province at his disposal constituted an important development; while the return of Turki's eldest son, Faisal, to Riyadh after his escape from captivity in Egypt was not only a gratifying domestic occurrence, but a happy augury for the future of the dynasty and the State.

Meanwhile local trouble in the Qasim demanded Turki's intervention, and the provincial leaders were summoned to Riyadh to renew their pledges of loyalty and obedience. The governor of Buraida, Muhammad Al 'Ali al Sha'ir, was relieved

of his post and detained temporarily at Riyadh, while 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah was appointed to succeed him. The Mutair and elements of Bani Khalid in alliance with them were satisfactorily dealt with in a spring raid in the Summan tract; and soon afterwards Turki received deputations from a number of tribes of central Najd (Subai', Suhul, 'Ajman, Mutair and Qahtan) with pledges of loyalty and support for his régime. Its growing stability and influence were emphasised by the arrival of a deputation from the people of 'Uman, requesting his support against their enemies by the despatch of an army and the appointment of a governor and Qadhi. In response to this appeal 'Umar ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ufaisan was sent with an adequate force to instal 'Abdullah ibn Sa'ud of Quai'iya as governor of the province with headquarters at Buraimi, and the shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz al Ma'usaji ('Ausaji?) as Qadhi. On their arrival they were welcomed by deputations and messages of loyalty from the Dhahira (or hinterland of the Pirate Coast) and even some elements from the Batina of the 'Uman coastal area. Meanwhile Turki, accompanied by his son Faisal, summoned a gathering of the clans from a wide area, extending from Wadi Dawasir in the south to Washm and Sudair, for autumn and winter manoeuvres, apparently intended as a demonstration of solidarity rather than for any more specific purpose. Washm was appointed as the rendezvous of the force, which was however soon removed into the Tuwaiq highlands owing to an outbreak of cholera. The disease had nevertheless made its appearance among the troops, of whom many died in camp at Majma'a, though it did not spread into the town. Faisal was sent off on a raid against a section of the 'Anaza in the neighbourhood, but the tribesmen evaded his attentions by flight. Turki remained at Majma'a for a month ordering the affairs of the province: the governor of Sudair, Ibn 'Abdan, being relieved and replaced by Ahmad ibn Nasir al Sani'.

The summer of 1829 seems to have passed without incident; but in the autumn Turki despatched Muhammad ibn 'Ufaisan on a raiding expedition into al Ahsa, where a rich caravan on the way from 'Uqair to Hufhuf was captured. This raid may well have indicated Turki's intention of coming to grips with the 'Arai'ar dispensation in the province. But it was actually the 'Arai'ar brothers, Muhammad and Majid, who took the

initiative by declaring war on Turki and assembling with a large force in the Summan. Turki rapidly reassembled his clans, and despatched them under the command of Faisal to meet the threat. A fierce and well-balanced battle raged round the watering of 'Aqla near the mud-flat of Khufaisat al Mihmari from about the middle of February onwards until on the 24th, which happened to be the first day of Ramdhan, Majid ibn 'Arai'ar was killed. Confident now of success, Faisal sent the good news to his father, who arrived on the scene about the middle of March with reinforcements to press home the advantage already gained. The battle was renewed with intensified ferocity on both sides, with Turki's army gradually getting the upper hand until March 22nd, when an assault in full strength was delivered on the enemy's positions. His retreat degenerated into a rout, with Turki's men in pursuit, slaying the fugitives and pillaging the 'Arai'ar camp and stores. Few escaped on horseback, including Muhammad ibn 'Arai'ar and his staff; but the Mutair, seeing how the battle was developing, had withdrawn to safety before the final assault and thus contributed to its success.

After about a fortnight spent on the scene of the battle in collecting and dividing the spoil, Turki and Faisal marched on al Ahsa in the wake of their messengers, sent ahead to demand the surrender and homage of its tribes and towns, most of which readily offered their submission. But Muhammad ibn 'Arai'ar and his relatives and retainers hastily organised their forts for resistance; though most of the Bani Khalid leaders fled on the approach of Turki, who appears to have occupied the town of Hufuf without opposition and set up his headquarters at the hill of Abu Ghanima near by. There he was visited by the civil and religious leaders of the various towns and villages of the great oasis, offering their submission and pledging their loyalty, while Muhammad held only the great fort of al Kut at the north-western corner of Hufuf. He yielded gracefully however to Turki's invitation to surrender on honourable terms, and the Hasa province once more took its place in the Wahhabi realm. Turki and Faisal remained in the area about a month and a half, ordering its affairs and paying special attention to the religious needs of the people, who were summoned to learn and obey the prescriptions of the Almighty for their welfare, to be regular in attendance at the mosque services, and in

general to conform to the pattern of the Wahhabi régime. 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan was appointed as governor of the province, while its ecclesiastical affairs were entrusted to the care and zeal of Shaikh 'Abdullah al Wuhibi. Good rains, excellent crops and low prices seemed to set the seal on a year of great achievement. And the annals of Najd record nothing of significance until after the turn of the year (1830).

Towards the end of January 1831 we find Turki making an excursion in the direction of Hafar al Batin near the 'Iraq frontier, where he encountered and attacked elements of the Subai' tribe, to whom however he restored their looted property on their representation that his attack had constituted an unprovoked breach of the agreement under which they had pledged their loyalty to him. He then proceeded to Subaihiya in Kuwait territory, where he remained for a considerable time, receiving gifts from the Kuwait chief, Jabir ibn 'Abdullah ibn Sabah, and the homage of the local tribes. But while here he received disturbing news from Riyadh, whither he sped to ascertain the facts for himself.

It will be remembered that some years before Turki had appointed his cousin Mishari ibn 'Abdul-Rahman to the governorship of Manfuha, and that possibly this same Mishari had been sent in command of an expedition against the Bani Khalid at Hafar al 'Atk. Whether this mission was intended to provide an excuse for his removal from his post at Manfuha (if the two Misharis are one and the same person) or not we do not know; but it was now reported to Turki that Mishari had left Riyadh with his retainers intending revolt. Turki was not sufficiently alarmed by this development to keep his army together on his return from Kuwait, and all territorial contingents were duly dismissed to their homes. Meanwhile Mishari was on his way north seeking support for his movement. At Mistawi he fell in with a sectional chief of Mutair, who rejected his advances, whereupon he approached various elements in the Qasim, again with no success. He then appealed to the Sharif of Mecca, Muhammad ibn 'Aun, who also would have nothing to do with his proposition. He left Mecca in despair, realising that a rising against Turki was not the sort of thing the people of Najd wanted, and intending to go to Riyadh and throw himself on his uncle's mercy. He was received with kindness, and given a residence at Riyadh near the castle. Ibn

Bishr dates the return and pardoning of Mishari to the end of May 1832; and, if that is true, we must assume that he remained at Mecca for the best part of a year. In any case his attempt at revolt was entirely abortive, and left no mark on the contemporary history of Najd.

In July 1831 Faisal led a strong force into the uplands of Najd to raid the 'Ataiba, whom he found and utterly defeated at the wells of Talal. But his men were scattered, collecting the 'Ataiba camels and other booty, when the fugitive tribesmen returned with reinforcements from a Mutair concentration which happened to be summering in the neighbourhood. The tables were turned on the victors, but Faisal and his bodyguard covered the retreat of his force, while it retired on Quai'ya with much of the booty taken in the first battle (said to have comprised some 3,000 camels).

Just before this, in the early part of May, a gale of great force had swept through Najd and done much damage among the palm-groves, though it is recorded that most of the loss occurred among the smaller palms, while the tall stems had resisted the onslaught with but slight damage. The Meccan pilgrimage of this summer, taking place towards the end of the same month, was visited by a grievous outbreak of cholera, which carried off thousands of pilgrims, and those who had been in contact with them. Ibn Bishr goes on to record a number of meteorological and astronomical phenomena which preceded, and therefore seemed to presage, a great epidemic of bubonic plague, which ravaged Iraq and the Kuwait area with appalling effect, but did not apparently penetrate into Najd, for nearly a year from August 1832. Among the phenomena mentioned was the illumination of the sky as if by moonlight during the last five nights of the lunar month of Safar (about August 5th to 10th); the sun rising green towards the end of August or early in September: the appearance of the northern lights and a splendid *aurora borealis* during the early nights of the latter month, causing people to think that the sun had not set; and finally at the end of the month or the beginning of October the conjunction of five 'planets' (the sun, the moon, Mars, Saturn and Mercury) in the constellation of Leo!

Turki spent the spring months of 1832 in the 'Arma desert, with nothing particular to engage his attention except occasional reports of tribal reluctance to pay the taxes due, followed by

expeditions to enforce payment. In the late summer or early autumn Faisal was sent to chastise one of the sections of the 'Anaza, pasturing in the Dahna; but they had fled on receipt of warning of his coming; and he turned aside for a sojourn at Majma'a, where he recruited a force for an expedition to 'Uman under the supreme command of 'Umar ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ufaisan: the details of which are not on record. Faisal meanwhile returned to Riyadh; but Turki himself led an expedition into the Hasa province to bring the 'Ajman to book for some misdemeanour. Falah ibn Hithlain had fled before his arrival at Umm Rubai'a; but the chief of the Murra tribe took advantage of the opportunity of making his submission, while Falah himself, on hearing of this, surrendered unconditionally, and was sent to Riyadh for internment. Turki now paid a visit to the Qatif district, where he received the usual gifts and assurances of loyalty. A month was then spent in the Hufhuf area before he set out for Riyadh: pausing on the way at the watering of Wuthailan, west of the Dahna, to hold a tribal *durbar*, in the course of which he lectured his audience generally on the philosophy of good government. And, when challenged by the Amir of Buraida to be more specific in his insinuations of shortcomings on the part of the leaders, he replied: 'Verily my words are addressed to you and the likes of you; for you think that you have won the country with your swords, whereas it was the sword of Islam that won it and protected it, and unity under a leader.'

The gathering broke up in a mood of somewhat sulky submission to a strong man who was capable, as all knew, of passing from mere strictures to more positive action for the suppression of corruption in high places. Turki was assured of loyal obedience to his wishes, but the necessity of such plain speaking at such a time, when he had virtually restored the empire lost by 'Abdullah, would seem to suggest that there was yet much to do to get the ship of State on an even keel. Events had already made it clear that there was no real alternative to Turki as the ruler of the country; but the personal and parochial jealousies of the Arab tribes and towns always made it possible for sedition to raise its head. The death of Faisal al Duwish soon after this conference weakened the leadership of the powerful but unstable tribe of Mutair, to which Faisal's son, Muhammad al Makni, now succeeded. And the sudden appearance in the

Qasim of an impostor claiming to be Khalid ibn Sa'ud, the brother of the ill-fated 'Abdullah, who had been carried off to Egypt by Ibrahim Pasha, could not fail to create a flutter in the dovecots of Najd. The man was hospitably entertained under Turki's orders: but when he arrived at Riyadh his imposture was exposed by people who had known the real Khalid; and the last we hear of him is his escape to Egypt and his reported execution by Muhammad 'Ali. The return of Mishari at about this time, already noted above, was perhaps a more serious matter; but the steps taken by Turki to welcome him and make all arrangements for his comfort seemed to have disposed of any complications likely to be created by his presence in Najd. Economic conditions in the country had greatly improved owing to good seasonal rains, in spite of a spell of intense cold during the winter of 1832/3, when the water froze as it was raised from the wells, and the palm-groves suffered considerable damage, the effects of which were not to appear until the harvest season of the two following summers.

Events at Zubair and Basra, and in the Yaman Tihama, threw into relief the comparative calm of Turki's Arabia. But the peace there was broken during the summer and autumn of 1833 by a long-drawn-out battle royal at al Murabba' in the Sirr district, in which the protagonists were the Mutair and 'Anaza tribes, and their respective allies drawn from most of the tribes of the desert. Turki for some reason refrained from any intervention in the struggle, which ended in the complete defeat and flight of the 'Anaza and their confederates. It is suggested by Ibn Bishr that Turki may have been preoccupied at this time with the problem of Mishari; but a more probable explanation, also advanced by Ibn Bishr, for his inaction was his concern for the stability of the Hasa province, whence he had received reports of trouble brewing in the Qatif area. War had broken out between the folk of Jazirat al 'Ama'ir and the ruler of Qatif, 'Abdullah ibn Ghanim, and the supply routes of the port had been cut. Turki, having organised a muster of his forces, sent Faisal in command of them to the relief of his vassal. Marching by way of the Rumhiya wells at the edge of the Dahna, he attacked and routed the besiegers, who fled to the fort at Dammam, which belonged to the ruler of Bahrain. Faisal followed them up to Saihat, where he made arrangements for besieging the garrison, while he also occupied and

garrisoned the islands of Tarut and Darin. His activities were however interrupted by the alarming news from Riyadh that his father, Turki, had been assassinated by the associates of Mishari ibn 'Abdul-Rahman, as he emerged from the mosque after the Friday prayers: and that Mishari had occupied the castle and compelled the citizens of the capital to acknowledge him as their ruler.

This tragedy had been enacted some days before May 10th, 1834. Faisal kept the news to himself for the time being, and broke off the siege of Saihat, taking 'Abdullah ibn Ghanim with him to Hufhuf. Here he assembled his principal lieutenants, including the governor of al Ahsa, 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan, and the Hail prince, 'Abdullah ibn 'Ali ibn Rashid, with whom he had struck up a warm friendship since his arrival at Riyadh to offer his services to Turki. Others on whom he could count absolutely included the governor of Buraida, 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn Hasan (the same man who had been so roundly rated by Turki at Wuthailan!), and Hamad ibn Ghaihab of Shaqra, and Turki al Hazzani of Hariq. Having informed them of the news he had received, he sought their advice, which was unanimous in favour of immediate action to recover Riyadh and punish the impostor. To confirm their advice they all took the oath of loyalty to Faisal as their rightful Imam and ruler: and Ibn 'Ufaisan placed the local treasury and stores entirely at his disposal. Arrangements were pressed on for an early start; and on June 10th, 1834, Faisal's force arrived in the neighbourhood of Riyadh. Mishari apparently had no prior information of these moves; but the walls and turrets had already been manned by his troops. Faisal sent forward parties to effect an entry into the town and occupy the buildings round the castle: and these were readily admitted by the contingents guarding the walls. The bombardment of the castle was begun at once. It was well supplied with provisions and arms to stand a siege; but the desertion of a party of Subai' tribesmen weakened the garrison of about 140 men, which Mishari and his chief supporter, Suwaiyid ibn 'Ali the Jalajil chief, had for its defence: and the latter sent a message to Faisal offering to surrender himself and his followers on a guarantee of their immunity. This was agreed to on condition that Faisal's men should be admitted to the castle; and ropes were let down from the walls, by which an assault party of forty men, led by

'Abdullah ibn Rashid, reached the roof and scattered in search of Mishari and his henchmen, who were dragged from their hiding-places and slain. The head of Mishari was thrown out into the castle yard to convince the people that their murdered Imam had been duly avenged. And the citizens of Riyadh flocked to do homage to Faisal as their new ruler. This was on June 18th, 1834: about forty days after the assassination of Turki, whose reign had lasted almost exactly eleven years, reckoned from his arrival at 'Arqa.

Faisal ibn Sa'ud

THE short reign of Turki had been of the utmost importance in restoring something of the shattered fortunes of the Wahhabi State and the prestige of the House of Sa'ud. He had at least repaired the foundations on which both State and dynasty had risen during the half-century preceding the disaster of Dar'iyā to the dimensions of an empire such as Arabia had not known since pre-Islamic times: and on which they could, and indeed would, rise again to take their place in a modern world far beyond the wildest dreams of Turki and his contemporaries. There would be ups and downs in the process of restoration and development; but it is fair to say that, had it not been for Turki's patient and persistent efforts to repair the ruin he had inherited, the Sa'udi Arabia of his great-grandson would never have had a chance of realisation. If ever there was a 'man of destiny', it was he: born in the purple, it is true, but with no expectation, nor indeed ambition, to rule; but summoned by the dire need of his country to assume its leadership when others, whom he had been very willing to recognise and serve, had failed in their self-sought missions.

He must have been well advanced in years when he was assassinated, though there would seem to be no record of the date of his birth, which can therefore only be estimated on a basis of probabilities. It is on record that he played a worthy part, like many other members of the Sa'ud family, in the defence of Dar'iyā against Ibrahim Pasha, and that one of his sons, Fahd, was killed in action, while another, Faisal, who was to succeed him on the throne, also took part in the same operations. Three of his brothers—Zaid, Muhammad and Sa'ud—also fought in defence of the capital: the last two being killed in action. It is however a fact that there is no specific mention of Turki in connection with the activities of 'Abdul-'Aziz I and Sa'ud I, though he was presumably included among the sons of his father, 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad, who is mentioned as being in constant attendance at the court of Sa'ud 'with his

sons', and whose first appearance in Wahhabi history dates back to 1746, when he accompanied an expedition for the relief of Manfuha during its siege by Dahham ibn Dawwas, the ruler of Riyadh. From then onwards there are frequent notices of him as a leader of various expeditions on behalf of his father, Muhammad, and his distinguished brother 'Abdul-'Aziz I, until in 1803 we find him at the latter's side during the Friday prayers in the Turaif mosque when he was assassinated by a Shia' fanatic in revenge for the desecration of Karbala. We know that he lived well into the eleven-years reign of his nephew, Sa'ud, though his death is nowhere recorded. It must have occurred before 1814, say 1812, giving him a span of sixty-six years from the date of the expedition of 1746, when it is reasonable to suppose that he must have been at least twenty years of age. He would therefore have been about eighty-six at his death, while his elder brother, 'Abdul-'Aziz I, was born in 1721, and his eldest son and successor, Sa'ud, in 1748. 'Abdul-'Aziz was thus eighty-two when assassinated in 1803, while Sa'ud was fifty-six at his accession and sixty-six at his death. The cousins, Sa'ud and Turki, could scarcely have been very far apart in the matter of age: and the latter cannot have been very far short of eighty when assassinated in 1834.

His eldest son and successor Faisal is known to have taken part in the fighting at Dar'iya, and is generally reputed to have accompanied Sa'ud's expedition of 1803, which resulted in the capture of Mecca. He can scarcely have been more than fifteen on that occasion, and was thus in the middle forties when he ascended the throne, and well over seventy when he died in 1865. The longevity of the principal Sa'udi rulers is indeed a remarkable phenomenon, with only eight generations (including one extinguished by murder and one only just ended) spanning a period of over 300 years since the birth (in approximately 1640) of Muhammad ibn Miqrin, the father of the eponymous Sa'ud. A hundred years separated the birth of the latter from the death of his eldest son and successor, Muhammad, while more than a century elapsed between the birth (in 1850) of the late king's father, 'Abdul-Rahman, and his own death in 1953.

Turki never quite reached the territorial limits won and lost by his predecessors, as the Hijaz was not destined to return to the Wahhabi fold until nearly a century later, and the Yaman

was lost for good, while the highland provinces of Najran and 'Asir were virtually independent under their own ruling clans. On the other hand the Ahsa province had been effectively brought to heel, while the 'Uman territory, which had never been wholly lost, was now definitely back under Wahhabi jurisdiction and administration. Jabal Shammar and Wadi Dawasir formed the northern and southern limits respectively of the central bloc, while the western oases (Bisha and Ranya, Khurma and Turaba, Khaibar and Taima) seem to have been linked with the Sa'udi realm by somewhat looser ties. Within these limits Turki had managed to establish a remarkable measure of peace and good order both in the tribal areas and in the settled districts, though his historian's idyllic description of the state of affairs in his time must obviously be discounted somewhat liberally in assessing the assets inherited by Faisal.

The latter is represented to us as a deeply religious man of studious and ascetic tendencies, well versed in the teachings of the faith, having the Quran by heart from his youth, and spending long hours of the night in prayer and conscious communion with the Almighty, in search of divine help in his worldly difficulties. 'And what troubles and calamities hovered over him!' comments Ibn Bishr, 'and what terrible dangers he encountered! such as would induce despair in the pious and the learned, let alone rulers and princes!' It might well have seemed at his accession that he had every prospect of a calm and prosperous reign; and there can be no doubt that this devotion to his religion, his country and his people was in no way less great than that of his father. At the time of his return to Najd in 1828 he had spent the best part of a decade as a prisoner of the Turks in Egypt; and the very fact of his escape thence to rejoin his father may be taken as an earnest of his determination to keep his country free of all foreign control or interference. During the six years which had elapsed since then he had been his father's right-hand man in the reconstruction and stabilisation of the realm: playing a very prominent part in the recovery of the vital Ahsa province, on which the economy of the country so largely depended. And the suddenness of his call to the throne involved no real break of continuity in the conduct of affairs. Yet he was not destined to a peaceful reign; and the last pictures we have of him in the years just preceding his death, by William Gifford Palgrave

and Colonel Lewis Pelly, show him as a blind old broken man, suspicious, prompt to anger, capricious and open to the influence of his court officials, while the shadow of domestic dissension loomed dark over the last years of his life.

Ibn Bishr, the historian, lived to see these troubles develop into fratricidal strife; but there is no reason to believe that his brief estimate of the qualities of Faisal's sons at the time of his accession was the result of retrospective knowledge. The fact that he does not mention 'Abdul-Rahman, who was born in 1850, and the termination of his annals with the year 1851, would seem to indicate that he was not so influenced, though his prayer that God might make his offspring worthy of him and guide them in the straight path does suggest a suspicion that all might not be well. Be that as it may, he gives Muhammad precedence among Faisal's three sons without actually saying that he was the eldest of them. He and his brother, 'Abdullah, are described as paragons of virtue and religious zeal, while Sa'ud, certainly the youngest of the trio, is praised for his kingly bearing, courage and generosity from infancy onwards. We do not know when any of them was born; but the probabilities are that Muhammad and 'Abdullah at least, if not Sa'ud also, must have ante-dated the fall of Dar'iya: though it is not unlikely that Sa'ud was born after his father's escape from Egypt in 1828, in which case he was still a mere child at Faisal's accession, and under fifty when he died in 1875.

The troubles of Faisal's last years were, however, still far distant in 1834, when he assumed the reins of government, and opened his reign with a month-long conference at Riyadh with all the principal ecclesiastical leaders of the realm, including two grandsons of Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, namely 'Ali and 'Abdul-Rahman, both sons of Husain, who were then respectively Qadhis of Hauta and al Kharj. This was followed by a series of customary visits of congratulation by the leading lay personalities of the various districts, who duly pledged the loyalty of themselves and their fellow-citizens. And as soon as these formalities had been concluded, he sent forth his tax-gatherers east and west and south and north to collect the tithes due to the central treasury. The official sent to the south reported internal dissensions in Wadi Dawasir and the Aflaj area, whither a military expedition was immediately despatched to bring the people to order. Meanwhile Faisal him-

self dealt with a tribal section of the Dawasir wintering in the 'Arma desert on his way to his spring camp near Tuwair, which he had appointed as a rendezvous for an imposing gathering of the tribal and citizen contingents of his territorial army. He then proceeded in force for a long sojourn at Sha'ra in the Najd uplands, where his first care was for the religious needs of the people, who were ordered to attend instructional classes every day after the afternoon prayers. He did not however neglect the more mundane needs of his treasury, and the tax-collectors were kept busy. A Qahtan section was reported to him as having fled to avoid paying their dues, and was promptly searched out and roughly handled by Faisal in person, with a consequent loss of some sixty lives during the punitive operations. Such incidents constituted the normal small change of desert life, and in no way indicated the existence of any ill-feeling against the government.

Faisal did however at this time (May 1835) court trouble in an outlying province by deciding to reward 'Abdullah ibn 'Ali ibn Rashid, his close friend and doughty supporter in stamping out the sedition of Mishari, with the governorship of Jabal Shammar at the expense of the then incumbent, Salih ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin ibn 'Ali, who represented the senior line of the princely family of Hail. One of the leading Shaikhs was sent with him to teach the citizens something of the true principles of the faith: but after his departure a few months later there was trouble in Hail: beginning with some quarrel in the main mosque after the Friday prayers, and ending with the flight of the deposed governor and all members of his family to the Qasim after a sharp brush with the new chief's men. On the matter being reported to Faisal, he sent orders to the Qasim authorities to round up the fugitives and put them to death. This was duly done, and Salih himself with other members of his family were killed, while others escaped to Madina. 'Abdullah remained the undisputed master of Jabal Shammar as a vassal of the Wahhabi State, being followed in the same rôles in due course by two of his sons, while a third, Muhammad, was destined not only to make his State completely independent of Riyadh, but also to absorb the Wahhabi realm within his own till the end of the century.

At this time the Turks in the Hijaz under Ahmad Pasha, with the support of Muhammad ibn 'Aun, the Sharif of Mecca, were

making serious efforts to bring the 'Asir province under effective control. But the excessive exactions of the large army sent down to achieve this object produced a strong reaction among the 'Asir tribes, who combined to attack and inflict a resounding defeat on the enemy army, of which only a small part escaped to Mecca with the Pasha and the Sharif. And whether it was because of this failure or because he suspected that the Sharif was not playing the part of a loyal vassal, Muhammad 'Ali summoned both the commanders to Cairo in the summer of 1835, and detained the Sharif.

Meanwhile the 'Asir chiefs had sent much of the booty captured from the Turks to Faisal in token of their solidarity with his cause, while Muhammad 'Ali, already planning no doubt to bring Faisal to book, sent Dausari ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab abu Nuqta, who had been a prisoner in Egypt since the Dar'iya days, to him with a demand for the payment of tribute. Faisal's reaction to this move was to send valuable presents to Ahmad Pasha in Mecca by the hand of his brother, Jiluwi, who could not have been more than fifteen or sixteen at this time, having been born during his father's sojourn in exile after his escape from Dar'iya. Jiluwi remained in Mecca to perform the pilgrimage in April 1836, before returning to his brother, who was at the time in his spring camp at Raudha Tanhat on the western edge of the Dahna: collecting taxes and generally seeing to the maintenance of peace and order in the desert. It was probably here that he received the visit of the sons of the Shaikh of Bahrain, 'Abdullah ibn Khalifa: having himself somewhat earlier visited the Gulf coast to receive the homage of the rulers of Qatif and Saihat.

On his return to Riyadh he despatched one of his slave officials to the Qasim to collect the taxes of the 'Anaza tribe, while he also, at the request of the principal chiefs of the Qasim, sent one of the leading Shaikhs, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Rahman abu-Butaiyin, to 'Anaiza to cater for the spiritual needs of the Qasim population during a visit which was intended to be quite short. This mission was however so successful that the people of 'Anaiza insisted on his bringing his family and settling down permanently among them. Incidentally the seasonal rains of 1835/6 had utterly failed, and the new year ushered in a long period of drought and consequent high prices, resulting in the emigration of considerable numbers to the neighbourhood of

Basra and Zubair: the historian meticulously noting the appearance of a conspicuous comet in the Great Bear for five or six weeks after October 9th as a presage of the drought, which in turn was inflicted on the country for the wickedness resulting in the murder of Turki. A similar period of drought had visited the people, he tells us, after the assassination of 'Abdul-'Aziz.

But the comet and the drought were harbingers of a greater disaster. Muhammad 'Ali had made up his mind to reimpose his will on the Arabian desert, and had secured for his project the cooperation of Khalid ibn Sa'ud, son of the great Sa'ud and brother of the Mishari who had unsuccessfully tried to restore the dynasty in 1820. Khalid was among the members of the family carried off by Ibrahim Pasha into captivity in Egypt, and had thus been away from Najd for eighteen years. He was the senior surviving brother of the ill-fated 'Abdullah, and, as we have seen, he had already once been unsuccessfully impersonated in an attempt to challenge Turki's position at Riyadh. It was therefore a clever move on the part of Muhammad 'Ali to associate his projected invasion of Najd with one who might well be regarded by its people as the rightful successor to the family honours. Late in 1836, or early in the following year, he arrived at Yanbu' in company with Isma'il Agha, the Turkish commander of the expeditionary force of some 2,000 men. Faisal, on hearing of this development, sent a spy with presents for Isma'il to find out and report on his intentions. The news of his advance *via* Madina to Hanakiya, and the advice of 'Abdullah ibn Rashid and other leaders, who were at Riyadh at the time, decided Faisal to anticipate the advance of the enemy by occupying the Qasim, lest the arrival of Isma'il there might force the people to submission. Summoning a full muster of his forces to meet him at a northern rendezvous, he left Riyadh in March *via* Khufaisa for Sarif, where he heard that Isma'il and Khalid had already reached Rass. He then moved to 'Anaiza, whose levy and that of Buraida, under their respective Amirs, joined him in his advance to Riyadh al Khabra, not far from Rass. After some desultory skirmishing and the refusal of the people of Shinana, whose Amir had actually gone to Rass to make terms with Isma'il, to admit a force sent by Faisal, divided counsels resulted in his withdrawal to 'Anaiza. And that was the beginning of a general break-up of

the Wahhabi forces: Faisal himself returning to Riyadh, and apparently abandoning any idea of contesting the enemy occupation of the Qasim.

Even at Riyadh he was doomed to disillusionment: finding the people in an ugly temper and in no mood to support him, either because of his failure to stand up to the Turks in the Qasim or, as is perhaps more probable, because Khalid's friends and agents had succeeded in turning public opinion against him. Fearing treachery, he remained in his capital only long enough to collect the arms, funds and stores available in the castle, before proceeding with the remnants of his army to al Kharj, whence, after ten days, he proceeded to al Ahsa, which he reached about the beginning of May 1837. Loyally supported by 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan, the governor, he remained here till about the middle of July, assembling an army mainly from the Mutair, 'Ajman, Subai' and Suhul tribes, and from the Ahsa towns and villages, who had no desire to renew the acquaintance of the Turks in their midst.

Meanwhile Isma'il Agha had marched on 'Anaiza, which resisted him only a short time before surrendering: its fall being rapidly followed by the submission of Buraida without opposition and the rest of the province. He then turned his attention to Ha'il, whence 'Abdullah ibn Rashid fled, leaving the field clear for the reinstallation of 'Isa ibn 'Ali as governor on behalf of Khalid ibn Sa'ud. A deputation from Riyadh visited the latter at 'Anaiza to plight their loyalty and that of the rest of Najd, except al Kharj and al Fara', whose leaders sent a message to Khalid, expressing willingness to accept him provided that it was he, and not the Turks, who had come to rule in Najd. This message reached him on his arrival with Isma'il Agha at Riyadh at the beginning of May. Isma'il insisted that such impudence should be suitably punished; and at the beginning of July, after he and Khalid had dealt with the folk of Mahmal and other matters nearer home, they set forth with an army of Turks and Arabs reckoned at some 7,000 men for the south. The governor of al Kharj, Fahd ibn 'Ufaisan, joined them on the way; but the people of Hauta and Hariq and the rest of the Fara' valley had made up their minds to resist the Turks to the utmost: being encouraged in this resolution by three grandsons and one great-grandson of Shaikh Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, all leading ecclesiastics of Riyadh, who had fled to

Hauta before their arrival. The local yeomen put up a magnificent resistance to the invading force; and a desperate battle resulted in the crushing defeat of the enemy, who suffered very heavy casualties, both in the actual battle and in the *saue qui peut* which followed in the desert: to say nothing of the loss of all their artillery and impedimenta. Khalid and Isma'il escaped to Riyadh with a small remnant of their cavalry, while Fahd ibn 'Ufaisan, who had joined the aggressors *en route*, escaped by night and set his men to the task of seeking out and killing as many of the fleeing Turks as possible.

On hearing the news of this defeat of the enemy, Faisal came posting up from al Ahsa with his army to Dilam, where he was joined by the Kharj contingent as well as by large numbers of folk from Hauta and Hariq. Isma'il, before proceeding to the south, had left a contingent of Turks and Moroccans at Riyadh; and when Faisal reached Masani', a village with extensive palm-groves to the south of Manfuha, Khalid came out to contest his passage with a strong body of Turks and citizens of Riyadh. He was however defeated in the stiff fight which ensued, when Faisal launched his reserves into the battle, and took refuge in Manfuha, as the road to Riyadh was blocked by Faisal's men. Khalid himself seems to have made good his escape to the capital, if he was actually in the Masani' fight, as he was not among those who surrendered to Faisal after a short siege of Manfuha, which now pledged its loyalty to the latter. He now laid siege to Riyadh itself, occupying all the surrounding palm-groves, while Khalid and Isma'il held only the walled town. This siege began on September 7th, 1837, and was pressed so closely that the necessities of life soon began to show signs of exhaustion. All animals within the town were progressively slaughtered for meat, until even the horses of the cavalry were used for the same purpose, while the price of coffee is said to have risen to 18 *Riyals* a *Sa'*. Khalid avenged himself by destroying all the houses belonging to anyone in the enemy camp, while the time came when, in desperation, all individuals incapable of taking part in the defence were collected and thrust out of one of the gates at night to find succour, if they could, in Faisal's camp. The siege had lasted until about October 5th, when Faisal and his principal advisers decided on an attempt to carry the town by assault. Scaling ladders were set up at numerous points all round the wall, and the attackers gained a lodgment on the

parapets; but the defenders fought back with desperation, and the assault was foiled.

At this juncture, on October 10th, a considerable force of Subai' and Qahtan tribesmen arrived to relieve the pressure on the town: and that night, under cover of darkness, Faisal raised the siege and withdrew to Manfuha. Five days later, after an exchange of letters suggesting a peaceful settlement of the quarrel, Faisal and Khalid met on neutral ground between the two towns for a conference lasting three hours without result, as there was no hope of solving the outstanding issue of the presence of the Turks, to whom Khalid was inextricably committed, while neither Faisal nor his principal lieutenants, nor the people of Najd for that matter, could countenance the renewal of the Turkish occupation. So the fight was on again, though the withdrawal of Faisal had enabled Khalid's friends to send in sheep and other supplies for the garrison in spite of an effort by Faisal to capture the convoy. By now it was the end of November, and the beginning of the fasting month of Ramdhan, during which there was some sporadic fighting. A caravan soon afterwards arrived at Riyadh from the Qasim in spite of Faisal's efforts to intercept it: bringing not only a large supply of money for the Turkish troops, but the welcome news of the arrival in the Qasim of Khurshid Pasha with reinforcements for Isma'il and Khalid.

This was on January 3rd, 1838, and the problem now was how to expedite the arrival at Riyadh of the Turks, delayed in the Qasim by fear of interception and attack by Faisal. It was decided to send an Arab escort with camels for the force under one Suyaifi, accompanied by a Turkish lieutenant; but when they arrived in the Qasim, they found that the Turkish plan was to cajole rather than fight Faisal. To this end Khurshid Pasha had been accompanied by Sharif 'Abdullah of Yanbu', who was commissioned to visit Faisal with gifts and fair words, including promises to confirm him in the government of Najd. The reinforcements remained therefore with Khurshid in the Qasim, and Suyaifi's escort was not needed; but Sharif 'Abdullah proceeded to meet Faisal, and in fact induced him to abandon the fight against Khalid, presumably in the hope that the Turks would fulfil their part of the bargain in due course. So Faisal, having collected all his stores and munitions in the Riyadh neighbourhood, and having dismissed his tribal allies

to their homes, went down to al Kharj. Having settled down at Dilam to enjoy the hospitality of the 'Ufaisan family with a force from the southern districts large enough to take care of itself, he proceeded to sound the intentions of the Turks by sending his brother, Jiluwi, on February 24th to Khurshid Pasha, then at Madina, with presents and friendly messages.

Meanwhile he took all necessary measures to secure the whole of the south, including 'Uman, al Ahsa and Wadi Dawasir, against all eventualities, while in the north his fortunes seemed to be reviving with the successful attempt of Ibn Rashid to recover Ha'il from the Turkish nominee, 'Isa ibn 'Ali. Northwards of al Kharj the country was generally committed to Khalid, who received deputations from the hitherto doubtful districts of Mahmal and Dhurma, and sent out his tax-collectors to gather in his dues from a country still in the grip of the drought and famine already mentioned. The Turkish reinforcements in due course arrived from the Qasim under a Kurdish commander, Mulla Sulaiman, now nominated to replace Isma'il Agha, who returned to Egypt. And Ahmad al Sudairi was sent as governor to the Sudair province with a contingent of Turkish cavalry, with orders to collect not only the taxes due to the government but also an indemnity for the part the provincial leaders had played during the recent siege of Riyadh. Ahmad was however able to temper the Turkish wind to the shorn lamb of the famine-ravaged country, while at the same time firmly discouraging any tendency of the local population to show their dislike of their new masters.

Towards the end of May Khurshid Pasha, accompanied by Jiluwi, arrived at 'Anaiza, and was received with honour and assurances of loyalty by the people and the tribes. But a trivial incident during June precipitated hostilities between the people and their guests: involving considerable loss of life on both sides until, after three days, peace was restored. Khurshid remained about five months at 'Anaiza, ordering the affairs of the province and receiving visits, the most important of which was one by 'Abdullah ibn Rashid, who was duly confirmed in the governorate of Ha'il and loaded with presents on his departure. Other important visitors were the Mutair chief, Muhammad al Duwish, and Ahmad al Sudairi, who came to pledge the loyalty of the Sudair province and was received with especial honour.

Khurshid's plan for the permanent occupation of Arabia,

with the inevitable corollary of a struggle with Faisal, was now beginning to be apparent. And Jiluwi, virtually a prisoner of his host, had to resort to a ruse to escape from his clutches: obtaining permission for a visit to Buraida, and making his way thence to rejoin his brother in al Kharj. Khurshid had meanwhile been busy in rebuilding and provisioning the fort of Safa in the 'Anaiza oasis, in which he left an adequate garrison in case of trouble when, about the middle of October 1838, he started his march down south by way of al Washm to Riyadh. Here he was joined by Khalid and his 'Aridh levies for the march on al Kharj; and the combined force reached Na'jan on the last day of October to find that all the inhabitants had joined Faisal in Dilam, on which he advanced in force. A sortie of the defenders was thrown back after a fierce struggle, known as the battle of al Kharab from the ruins of an old settlement, amid which Khurshid now made his headquarters. Faisal, having strengthened the town walls and dug a moat round them with fortifications covering the main source of water outside the walls, arrayed his forces to meet the attack of the enemy. The battle raged fiercely at various vital points, and in particular round the fort of Hina, which changed hands several times, until the Turks finally occupied it and were thus able to command the water.

At this juncture 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan arrived at the village of Sulaimiya with a strong force from al Ahsa, and sent a message to Faisal, proposing that the garrison should concert a strong sortie against the Turks with his own attack on their rear. The battle took place on November 25th, and raged from dawn till after noon: the Turks rallying strongly after an initial setback, and forcing Ibn 'Ufaisan to break off the engagement and retire to Sulaimiya. The latter then organised an attempt to waylay a convoy coming to the Turks from Riyadh at Hair in Wadi Hanifa, but a relief column, sent by Khurshid, drove off the attack and brought the convoy safely to its destination. Ibn 'Ufaisan now moved to the hamlet of Zumaïqa, near Dilam, in which was a large part of Faisal's food store; but disappointment at the meagre results achieved so far gave rise to bickering and dissension among his troops, and the Hauta and Hariq contingents deserted to their homes. Panic-stricken by this development, the villagers of Zumaïqa fled into the desert with their families, while Ibn 'Ufaisan himself withdrew to Sulaimiya, and thence

to the Sudaira wells to be out of reach of pursuit. Khurshid occupied Zumaiqa, and took over the stores there, on December 2nd (14th Ramdhan); and about ten days later the Hauta fugitives sent a deputation to him, seeking forgiveness and peace not only for themselves but for the contingent of their fellow-townsmen serving with Faisal in Dilam. This was readily granted: and Faisal, realising that his men from Hauta would either desert him or betray him, agreed to sue for a general amnesty for the whole garrison. His envoy was told that Khurshid was prepared to agree to this, subject to the sole condition that Faisal himself should surrender and proceed to Egypt to rejoin the other members of the Sa'ud family still there.

From that decision there could now obviously be no appeal to arms; and Faisal went forth in person to place himself in the Turkish Pasha's hands, after making sure that the lives and property of those who had served him so faithfully were adequately safeguarded. And four days later, about December 20th, 1838, he set out on his long journey to Egypt under the escort of Hasan al Yazji and his men, and accompanied into captivity by his brother Jiluwi, his own two sons 'Abdullah and Muhammad (Sa'ud was evidently still too young to be worth deporting) and his uncle's son, 'Abdullah ibn Ibrahim ibn 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad, commonly known as Sunaitan. On arrival at Cairo he was provided with a residence under guard, where he seems to have spent his days and nights in religious devotions: and where, it is said, sick people resorted to him to be cured by his reading of Quranic charms. As for 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan, he had been too warm a supporter of Faisal's cause to trust Khurshid Pasha's offer of amnesty; and he took refuge for a while at Bahrain before finally settling down at Kuwait. He had however advised his friends in al Ahsa to proceed to Riyadh and take the oath of loyalty to their new Imam, who was now the undisputed nominal master of all Najd under the supreme control of the Egyptian viceroy and his local representatives. Faisal had occupied the throne for four and a half years, and had had ten years of liberty before entering upon his second term of captivity.

Ahmad al Sudairi was now transferred from Sudair to the key province of al Ahsa, which had not forgotten the atrocities of Ibrahim Pasha's régime: perhaps to show that the new occupation was to be of a milder character. But the change of mood

was only temporary; and no sooner had Ahmad calmed the fears of the people and arranged for the administration of the territory, including Qatif, than he was transferred to the charge of the revenue department, while his place as governor was taken by a Turk named Muhammad Effendi, whose exactions and tyranny soon became a by-word until he was murdered by unknown assailants while returning to town from a visit to the thermal spring of 'Ain Najm. Ahmad, fearing that the instigation of this crime might be attributed to himself, promptly announced a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the murderers. Three men of the 'Awazim tribe, vassals of the Bani Khalid princes, who had previously applied unsuccessfully to Khurshid for the reversion of the provincial governorship, were denounced by informers. And the successor of Muhammad Effendi, another Muhammad Effendi sent by Khurshid from Riyadh, continued the tyrannical policy of his predecessor. Ahmad al Sudairi, who had looked upon these proceedings with disfavour, was now given leave of absence and replaced by 'Isa ibn 'Ali ibn Fa'iz in compensation for the loss of the governorship of Ha'il. Muhammad Effendi had been murdered in October 1839, while 'Isa ibn 'Ali had succeeded Ahmad al Sudairi during the following month.

Meanwhile Khurshid Pasha himself had been busy in the Kharj province, destroying the fortifications of Dilam, and garrisoning Sulaimiya with troops commissioned to supervise the cultivation of crops of the irrigation network dependent on the famous springs of the Saih district. He had also made heavy demands for the supply of grain and dates on the people of Hauta and the Fara' valley; and on his return to Riyadh he sent instructions to his lieutenant in charge of the garrison of Tharmida, Hasan al Mu'awin, to organise a large-scale assessment of crops and revenue throughout Najd 'from al Qasim to al Ahsa'. In May 1839 he transferred his headquarters from Riyadh to Tharmida, where he built a large fort for the accommodation of the garrison, and whither he bade all the towns and villages to deliver half of all the crops of the country in spite of the fact that the famine conditions of the previous years still prevailed, though on a reduced scale.

Incidentally Khurshid Pasha had, in March or April 1839, received the news of the death of Sultan Mahmud, son of Sultan 'Abdul-'Aziz, and the accession of his son 'Abdul-Majid. And

about a year later, when he had settled down at Tharmida, orders arrived from Egypt for his immediate return to that country with the bulk of his army. His main preoccupation now was to collect camels for the transport of his men and impedimenta to Madina, while the response to his demands varied from tribe to tribe, though his immediate requirements for moving his main body from Tharmida were met by the despatch of 700 animals from the Shammar districts by 'Abdullah ibn Rashid, who was possibly only too willing to speed the parting guests of Arabia. While awaiting their arrival, Khurshid and Khalid, who had apparently joined him at Tharmida, organised an expedition against the Shamir tribe in the Baiyadh desert, south of al Kharj. The excursion was not a success, but provided one interesting feature in that Khalid, who commanded the punitive force, was accompanied by 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian, who thus makes his first appearance in the annals of Najd: a distant cousin whose great-grandfather, Thunaian, was the brother of Khalid's great-grandfather, Muhammad, the first Wahhabi Imam.

In April 1840 Khurshid made a change in the governorship of al Ahsa, to which Hamad ibn Mubarak of Huraimila was appointed, presumably in succession to the second Muhammad Effendi; but a year later Khalid recalled Hamad and gave the post to Musa al Hamli, one of the Bani Khalid chiefs, while another of them, 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Mani', was given the revenue directorate in succession to 'Isa ibn 'Ali, who had died in harness about that time. This was of course after the departure of Khurshid, who had begun his homeward journey in the previous May, calling in the garrisons of Shaqra and Zilfi as he went, and halting in the Sirr district to espouse a married woman, whose husband had presumably obliged by divorcing her or had otherwise been disposed of. In due course Khurshid reached Shinana to make his final dispositions for withdrawal; and in mid-July the garrison of Tharmida was drawn in: Najd being left free of Turkish troops except for a few small pockets of them at Tharmida itself (only twenty men), Dhurma, Riyadh and some other places.

Towards the end of July, Khalid was summoned to Shinana for a final interview, after which he visited 'Anaiza and Buraida on his way back to Riyadh, whither he was followed by the Amirs of both towns, while at Shaqra he fell in with 'Abdullah

ibn Rashid, who was on his way to visit him. In October (Ramadhan) he issued a summons for a general muster of his territorial forces at Riyadh: not apparently with any specific objective in view, but rather to take stock of his position in the various provinces, in which he could no longer count on Turkish support against lukewarm or unsatisfactory governors or other elements. The clans of Sudair turned up in full muster with the provincial governor, Muhammad al Sudairi, and his father, Ahmad, who had been virtually dismissed from al Ahsa by Khurshid and was nominally no more than a private citizen in his home province. Khalid took advantage of this gathering to investigate complaints of exactions and other misdeeds against the Sudairis and various local governors, with the result that all concerned were dismissed from office, and a new governor, Abdullah al Husaiyin, was appointed to the province, with instructions to turn the Sudairi family out of the castle at Majma'a. For the purposes of the projected expedition against some elements of the Qahtan, the Sudair contingents were placed under the command of 'Abdul-'Aziz, the son of Shaikh 'Abdullah abu-Butaiyin, while the whole force was commanded by 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan, who, after a period of voluntary exile at Kuwait, had at this time come to Riyadh to make his peace with Khalid. The latter had always been suspect in the eyes of the people of Najd for his too obvious subordination to and dependence on the Turks; but the departure of Khurshid and the bulk of his army of occupation had served to remove this stigma, and there was nothing to suggest that Khalid's régime was anything but permanent.

Nevertheless his position was now soon to be challenged by a pretender, while in the northern provinces of the Qasim and Jabal Shammar a private war of major proportions was being waged between the governors of Hail and Buraida, without any attempt on the part of the central government to intervene. To deal with this incident first: there had for some years been bad feeling between 'Abdullah ibn Rashid of Hail and 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Muhammad, the governor of Buraida: and the quarrel had been aired at Riyadh in front of Khalid by the principals after his arrival from Shinana. On their return to their respective spheres, a relatively minor incident served to precipitate open hostilities. A section of the 'Anaza, based on the Qasim, raided a section of Shammar under Ibn Tawala, and lifted a large

number of camels: only to be counter-raided by 'Abdullah ibn Rashid himself, who not only recovered the booty, but appropriated most of the 'Anaza section's own animals. The aggressors were clearly the 'Anaza; but it was the governor of Buraida who took offence at their well-merited punishment, and consulted the governor of 'Anaiza and the chiefs of other Qasim villages with a view to organising a full-scale counter-attack against Hail itself. This was agreed to, and the governors of Buraida and 'Anaiza put themselves at the head of a considerable force comprising yeomen from the Qasim towns and villages and Badawin from several sections of 'Anaza, which assembled at Buqai'a. Thence they proceeded to raid a section of Shammar, with complete success and much booty taken; and Yahya ibn Sulaiman, the governor of 'Anaiza, suggested to his fellow-commander that they should be content with their gains and return home. The Buraida chief however swore that nothing would induce him to return until he had fought Ibn Rashid in the streets of his capital.

So the campaign continued, and the confederates advanced to the wells and hamlets of Baqa'a, some way to the east of Hail. Ibn Rashid immediately despatched his brother 'Ubaid with a cavalry force to attack the 'Anaza tribesmen on the watering of al Sa'ida, some little way from Baqa'a itself. A dawn attack by 'Ubaid was followed by a bitter struggle, whose fortunes varied from hour to hour until Yahya with a small force hastened on foot to the rescue of his friends from Baqa'a. Just as he arrived to take part in the fight, Ibn Rashid himself appeared on the scene with a large force, having followed up his brother in case of need. His attack was decisive, and the 'Anaza tribesmen took to their camels and fled in complete disorder, pursued by the Shammar cavalry and leaving Yahya and his men on foot to their fate. Seeing what was happening, 'Abdul-'Aziz and his Buraida contingent fled from Baqa'a with their own and Yahya's camels. Yahya and his men put up a desperate fight, but, being unable to get at the water, soon began to feel the pangs of thirst as the day grew hotter. Most of them were killed, while Yahya at his own request was conducted to Ibn Rashid's tent, where the ties of old friendship might have stood him in good stead, had it not been that a son of 'Abdullah ibn Rashid arrived there at the same moment, announcing that 'Ubaid had been killed in the fight. This was too much for

'Abdullah, who had Yahya slain in cold blood: presumably to regret his hasty act, when he discovered later that 'Ubaid was still alive.

The Buraida and 'Anaiza contingents are said to have lost seventy and eighty killed respectively, without taking the losses of the villages and the Badawin into account, out of a total force of some 1,200 men. And great were the spoils which fell into the hands of Ibn Rashid. Yahya's brother, 'Abdullah, who was at this time at Riyadh on a visit to Khalid, came posting back to 'Anaiza to assume control of the city government. He and other leaders of the Qasim, in concert with the 'Anaza chiefs, now conferred on ways and means of avenging their recent defeat; and before long a force of 4,000 men was at their disposal for an advance on Ha'il. They had however only reached the enemy frontier at Kahfa, when for some unexplained reason the expedition was abandoned, and the army disbanded. It is probable that the serious developments at Riyadh, which must now be dealt with, were decisive factors in bringing about this *débâcle*; as it must have been obvious to 'Abdul-'Aziz that the now possible combination of Riyadh and Ha'il would be more than he could afford to provoke to conflict.

Khalid may have had good reasons for wanting to keep his cousin, 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian, under his personal observation; and we have seen how he had taken him with him on the expedition against the Shamir. In July 1840 he had invited 'Abdullah to accompany him on his visit to Khurshid Pasha at Shinana, and had refused to accept his plea of ill health as a valid reason for his remaining behind at the capital. Nevertheless 'Abdullah managed to slip away from the caravan after its start, and sought refuge with 'Isa ibn Muhammad, the chief of the Muntafiq, on the 'Iraq border. On his return from Shinana, Khalid sent him friendly assurances that he had nothing to fear; and 'Abdullah came back. But the messenger he sent in to Riyadh from his camp near by, to announce his approach and spy out the land, must have returned with an unsatisfactory report, as 'Abdullah immediately fled to Ha'ir al Subai' in Wadi Hanifa, where he appears to have received offers of support from the Subai' chief, Rashid ibn Jafran, with whom he was connected by marriage. He then invited help from Hauta and Hariq for his policy of ridding the country of its Turkish controls and garrisons; and the influence of the Shaikhs who had taken

refuge there rather than stay at Riyadh with its Turkish garrison was used in his favour. An attempt by Khalid to appease him through the mediation of some loyal Subai' chiefs only served to clarify the position, as he roundly announced that he intended to fight. Khalid now became alarmed, and sent out a summons for his territorial levies; but the response from the districts was disappointing. The people of Riyadh were now ordered to join the proposed expedition against 'Abdullah ibn Thunaiian; and Khalid, leaving a garrison of Turks and Moroccans as well as his own henchmen in the castle under Hamad ibn 'Aiyaf, as Amir of the city, and 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan, as commander, slipped away to al Ahsa. This was about the beginning of October 1841; and that was the end of Khalid's reign of less than three years as a puppet of the Turks in the land of his ancestors. Deserted piecemeal by his supporters as the news of unfavourable developments came in from Riyadh, he withdrew from Hufhuf to Dammam: and proceeded thence *via* Kuwait and the Qasim to the safe refuge and peace of Mecca. There he died about twenty years later.

Meanwhile 'Abdullah ibn Thunaiian, having raised the standard of revolt, and assured of the support of the Subai' tribe and the southern districts, seems to have adopted tactics similar to those of Turki in his bid for the throne. He moved first on Dhurma, where there was a small Turkish garrison, and which on that account rejected his summons to surrender, though the neighbouring village of Muzahimiya had welcomed and acknowledged him. After some fighting and a short siege, the Turkish garrison agreed to depart in peace to rejoin their compatriots at Tharmida. 'Abdullah then occupied the town, and gave a foretaste of his methods by executing one of the principal leaders of the district and confiscating his considerable wealth. The citizens of Huraimila adopted a policy of neutrality in response to his demand for support: but 'Ammariya and Abal-Kabash sent contingents of volunteers, and 'Abdullah pushed forward to 'Arqa, which was taken by storm in spite of opposition by the garrison stationed there by Hamad ibn 'Aiyaf. Manfuha then acknowledged his cause, and he proceeded thither.

The people of Riyadh had for some time been appealing to Khalid for immediate help, while the Riyadh folk with him at Hufhuf insisted either that he should despatch a force to their relief or allow them to return home and make their peace with

the usurper. The force of 300 camels, representing some 500 men, which he sent towards the end of November, was soon engaged in desultory hostilities around Manfuha, in which it was supported by a sortie of the Riyadh garrison. On its return to the city under cover of darkness, it was followed unawares by Ibn Thunaiian and his men, who were admitted by friends in the Dakhna quarter, while the returned troops and citizens were celebrating the investment of the enemy in Manfuha with songs and martial dances. 'Abdullah ibn Thunaiian, who seems to have had some of the military qualities of Turki, suddenly appeared among them with drawn sword, and played a conspicuous part in the struggle which ensued. The Moroccans retreated to the castle, and closed the gate on the assailants. Ibn Thunaiian, having previously disposed his followers in various parts of the town, now made his headquarters in the house of the governor, Hamad ibn 'Aiyaf, whither the leading citizens flocked to acknowledge him as their ruler. Even 'Umar in 'Ufaisan obeyed his summons, and took the oath of loyalty. The Turks and Moroccans in the castle were then offered honourable terms of surrender on condition of quitting Riyadh, lock, stock and barrel; and next day, after some firing by the garrison, which caused 'Abdullah to man the neighbouring houses in case of a sortie, his terms were accepted, and the occupying troops filed out of the town.

'Abdullah ibn Thunaiian was now the undisputed master of Najd; and the usual deputations flocked to Riyadh to assure him of their loyalty, while he in turn showed very clearly that he was in no mood to tolerate strife and dissension in the provinces. Before the surrender of the troops he had summoned and summarily executed two of the doughtiest supporters of Khalid, Sa'd ibn Dughathir of one of the leading families, and the warrior slave Zuwaiyid. He now turned his attention to the Sudair deputation, and selected five of its leading members for execution for the part they had played in support of Khalid's reorganisation of the provincial administration. Actually two of them managed to escape from his clutches by flight, but the other three were put to death. And, in addition, the people of Majma'a were ordered to rebuild their castle, destroyed under the orders of Khalid, and four of their leaders were detained as hostages at Riyadh until his orders had been carried out. A new governor was also appointed to the province in the

person of 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Mishari ibn 'Aiyaf. It was now the turn of Wadi Dawasir to pay for past sins: the governor, Muhammad ibn Jalajil, and the local chiefs were dismissed from their offices, and 'Abdul-Rahman ibn 'Ubaikan was appointed governor of the province.

Early in the following year (1842) 'Abdullah ibn Battal al Mutairi, of a famous warrior family, was sent to occupy al Ahsa: and on his successful accomplishment of that task, 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan was sent thither to assume charge of the administration as governor. Resuming his old headquarters in the Kut of Hufhuf, he ordered the provincial notables to visit Riyadh to make obeisance to their new master; and four of them were duly detained there as hostages for the good behaviour of the rest and the province as a whole. The coastal area centring on Qatif still had to be dealt with however, and the problem there was complicated by the existence of certain vested interests of the ruling family of Bahrain. Accordingly, in June, Ibn Thunaiian sent out a summons for a general muster of his troops at the wells of Rumhiya and Rumah in the 'Arma district, where he made his headquarters about the middle of July. From here he sent a force under the slave, Bilal ibn Salim al Harq, to occupy Qatif itself, and 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan was ordered to proceed there to assume charge, while his cousin, Fahd ibn 'Abdullah ibn 'Ufaisan, acted as his deputy in al Ahsa during his absence. 'Umar, accompanied by Falah ibn Hithlain, chief of the 'Ajman, and contingents from Bani Hajir, Al Murra and the 'Amair tribes, duly received the submission of the port, whose governor, 'Ali ibn Ghanim, was sent on a visit to Ibn Thunaiian. Accused of disloyal intelligence with Bahrain, he was imprisoned and mulcted of much property: as also were Ibn Mani', Khalid's treasurer in al Ahsa, and many others. 'Umar also seized the governor of Saihat, and destroyed the walls of the town, which had been a fief of the Khalifa family of Bahrain.

It was at this juncture that Bahrain itself was troubled by an ebullition of internecine strife among its rulers: Muhammad ibn Khalifa rising against his uncle, 'Abdullah, the ruling Shaikh. The latter called in the Al Murra tribe, which proceeded to plunder and pillage the towns of the island; and Muhammad, unable to make any headway in his bid for the throne, fled to Ibn Thunaiian at Rumhiya. At the same time

the imprisoned governor of Saihat escaped from custody and fled to Bahrain. Ibn Thunaian now appointed Ahmad al Sudairi as Amir of Qatif and its district, while 'Umar ibn 'Ufaisan returned to his substantive post at Hufhuf. Having thus disposed of the affairs of his eastern provinces, Ibn Thunaian returned to Riyadh, and dismissed his territorial contingents to their homes with suitable gifts. He also sought to appease the Turkish authorities by sending gifts to 'Umar Pasha, the governor of Mecca, and Sharif Muhammad ibn 'Aun by the hand of Muhammad ibn Jalajil, the recently dismissed governor of Wadi Dawasir. Incidentally also he completed the occupation of al Ahsa by sending a force to seize the port of al 'Uqair, which was still held by the Bahrain authorities.

During the first fortnight of November (corresponding with the latter half of Ramdhan) the long drought of 'nine years' since the murder of Turki was broken by torrential rains throughout Najd, accompanied by floods of exceptional volume and duration in most of the main wadis, and particularly in those of Sudair, which had not known a flood for fourteen years. Much damage was inevitably done to palm-groves and growing crops at the time; but the whole country was to profit in the long run with bounteous pastures and bumper crops. And it was natural enough that in the light of events soon to follow the seasonal rains of this winter should have been regarded as a harbinger of good tidings in the political sphere.

Be that as it may, it was in February 1843 that Faisal, accompanied by his son, 'Abdullah, and his cousin, 'Abdullah al Ibrahim, and his brother, Jiluwi, managed to make good their escape from their well-guarded prison in the Cairo citadel, by letting themselves down the hundred-foot cliff by ropes: to find camels waiting by arrangement to carry them out of Egypt. All we are told by the Najdi historian about this romantic episode is that 'they proceeded to Jabal Shammar'! where they were warmly received by 'Abdullah ibn Rashid, Faisal's old friend and boon-companion, who now placed all his resources, his army and himself at his disposal without reserve. Messages were sent to all the district and tribal leaders, claiming their loyalty and inviting their support. 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian was advised by his friends to proclaim a *Jihad* forthwith, and to sally out to meet the coming danger, in the hope that his

taking the field might deter people from throwing in their lot with his rival. Nevertheless it soon became clear that Faisal was attracting adherents to his cause; and Ibn Thunaian sent the Amir of Dhurma to him with gifts. At the same time he advanced *via* Khafs to Sudair, where he got into touch with the Amir of Buraida, his most likely ally in view of the bitter hostility still persisting between him and Ibn Rashid. Proceeding now to Buraida, he received the Amir's assurances of loyalty and support; but this development created a flutter in 'Anaiza, where the governor, 'Abdullah ibn Sulaiman ibn Zamil, convened a conference of notables to consider their proper course of action.

Their unanimous decision was to support Faisal; and 'Abdul-'Aziz, son of Shaikh 'Abdullah abu-Butaiyin, was sent to inform him of this and to invite him to 'Anaiza. Faisal was already on the move southwards, and 'Abdul-'Aziz met him at Kahfa, whence he now made for 'Anaiza, while his brother Jiluwi and 'Ubaid ibn Rashid were detached from the main body with a small force to visit the Mutair chief, Muhammad ibn Faisal al Duwish, at his camp on the Hamada plain. Ibn Thunaian, on hearing of the enemy's plans, left his heavy stuff at Buraida and set off secretly to waylay Faisal on the road to 'Anaiza. But the latter had chosen a more devious route; and the first Ibn Thunaian heard of his arrival at his destination was the singing and *feux de joie* which greeted his entry. Disappointed at having missed such an opportunity, Ibn Thunaian returned to Buraida, only to find that considerable numbers of his followers, especially from Sudair and the southern districts, had deserted to Faisal. He now ordered his army to prepare for an advance on 'Anaiza, but directed his march towards Mudh-nib, whence he pushed on by forced marches southward in daily fear of an attack by Jiluwi and the Mutair, who however only caught up with stragglers in his rear in the Washm area. Meanwhile various territorial contingents of Ibn Thunaian's force deserted him *en route* to return to their homes, while Jiluwi and his Mutair allies drove eastwards to occupy the key oasis of Thadiq, covering the route from Riyadh to Sudair: 'Abdullah ibn Ibrahim being now sent to occupy the latter in Faisal's name, while messages were sent back to Faisal himself reporting that the road was clear for his advance on Riyadh.

Ibn Thunaian was now busy putting Riyadh into a proper

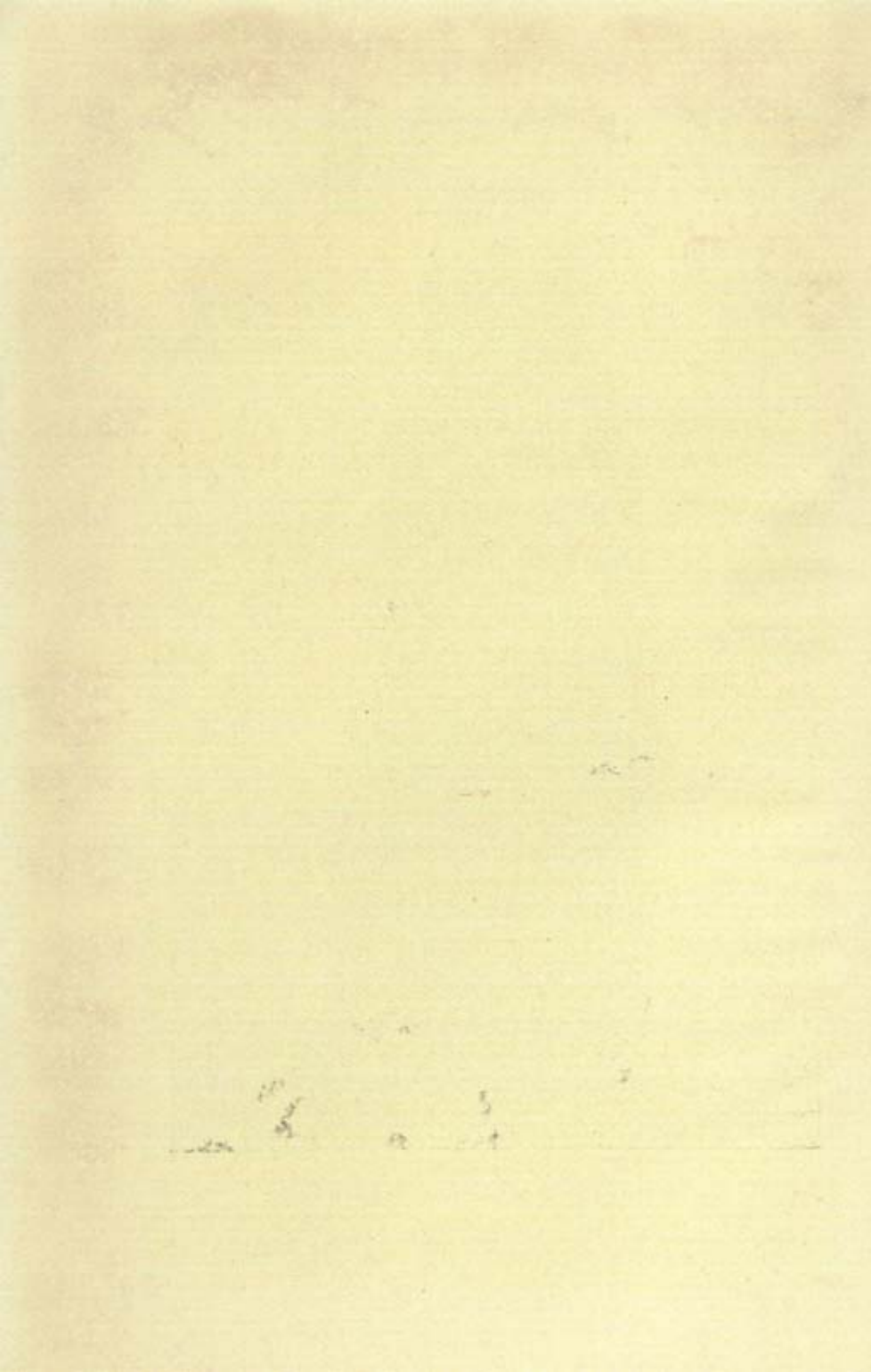
state of defence: demolishing houses in the immediate neighbourhood of the castle and allotting garrisons to the various towers and turrets of the circuit wall. In April Faisal moved from 'Anaiza to Shaqra. From there he proceeded to Huraimila, where he was joined by Jiluwi and the force under his command, while the Sudair leaders visited him to pledge their loyalty. Remaining here for a while, he despatched a message to 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian, suggesting a peaceable settlement of their quarrel for the avoidance of bloodshed, and offering him generous terms: under which he would be free to go forth with complete immunity from interference with all his men and arms and chattels to settle wherever he might chose in Najd or elsewhere, and would receive in addition an annual allowance sufficient for all his needs.

This offer being rejected, and a fight being now inevitable, Faisal moved down to Sadus, whence he wrote to the Amir of Manfuha, demanding his active support and proposing that his town should be his base of operations, as it had been during his siege of Khalid in Riyadh five years earlier. For some days after his arrival here he refrained from any act of hostility against Riyadh, with some of whose leading citizens he carried on a secret correspondence. Then on May 22nd he sent Jiluwi with a small force of chosen warriors with orders to enter the city by the Dakhna gate, which was to be opened to them by confederates within. Ibn Thunaian happened to be making a round of inspection in the town when the news of Jiluwi's entry was brought to him: whereupon he hastened back to the castle, while Jiluwi occupied and garrisoned various houses opposite, from which his fire could be brought to bear on it. Faisal himself now entered the town; and the battle lasted in the usual desultory manner for three weeks, during which a plot against Faisal's life by some Subai' tribesmen was discovered and foiled. On June 11th 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian sent a message to 'Ubaid ibn Rashid, suggesting his mediation for a peaceful settlement; but when 'Ubaid visited him to discuss matters, no basis for agreement appeared to exist, and negotiations were broken off.

A night or two later however Ibn Thunaian left the castle for some reason unexplained, and was recognised and seized by Faisal's patrols, and brought before him. He was committed to prison in one of the rooms of the castle, which soon yielded



His Majesty the Imam 'Abdullah I ibn Sa'ud



to Faisal's attack. All his property was confiscated, though his supporters received a free pardon, while those he had himself cast into prison were released and compensated for the property taken from them. The citizens of Riyadh hastened to congratulate Faisal on his return to the throne after an interval of rather less than five years; and his first acts were to reverse the arrangements imposed on al Ahsa and Wadi Dawasir by Ibn Thunaian: 'Abdullah ibn Battal al Mutairi being posted to the former as Amir, and one Ibn 'Uthaimin to the latter in the same capacity. The troops who had helped him to regain his throne were disbanded to their homes, while the problem of 'Abdullah ibn Thunaian was conveniently solved by his death in prison on July 13th, 1843. Faisal himself read the funeral prayer over him, and accompanied his corpse to the cemetery.

The return of Faisal to Najd had been heralded by the appearance in the western sky after sunset of March 2nd, 1843, of a comet, which remained visible till the end of the month, and which Ibn Bishr compares with the similar phenomenon of December 16th, 1618, recorded by Shaikh Mir'i ibn Yusuf al Hanbali, though the latter does not seem to have been accompanied by any notable activity in the sphere of man. Ibn Bishr himself only covers the first eight years of Faisal's resumed reign: completing his record, as he tells us himself, in May 1854, though he does not inform us why he had decided to write no more. As he lived till August 15th, 1873, and must have been an eye-witness of all the events of Faisal's reign and their immediate aftermath, we can only regret the cessation of his comments on the contemporary scene: for knowledge of which we have to depend (as from 1851 onwards) on an annalist born only in 1854, namely Ibrahim ibn Salih ibn Ibrahim ibn 'Isa of Ushaiqir in the Washm province. And even in his case political considerations were to interrupt his tale almost as soon as it began to reflect his personal knowledge of events and his mature judgment thereon.

The second period of Faisal's reign may in many respects be regarded as the threshold of modern Arabian history. So far as we know, the small Turkish garrisons, scattered about the desert, had withdrawn entirely to the Hijaz during the short reign of Ibn Thunaian. Faisal therefore had no foreign forces to reckon with in his realm; and Najd soon resumed the even tenor of its normal life. That was by no means synonymous

with a life of peace, prosperity and harmony, whose blessings have always been rare or intermittent in the desert, and to which indeed Faisal scarcely referred in a long and rather turgid pastoral epistle addressed to his lieges throughout the realm soon after his accession. Its content was for the most part theological, and doubtless the fruit of long musings in his Egyptian prison, where his genuine trust in God was his only consolation in adversity. It was therefore to this point that he directed the attention of his readers, and the audiences to which they read his message. Piety, or the fear of God, was the fundamental requisite of a happy life; and the principal ingredient of piety was belief in the one-ness of God. From it stemmed the urgent necessity of prayer, while the natural concomitant of prayer was the giving of alms, including of course the payment of taxes due to the Government; and it was the duty of every true Muslim to commend virtue and forbid vice. 'The pillars of Islam' he quoted from some ancient but unspecified authority 'are ten: the twofold witness (of the one God and the credentials of his Prophet); prayer; alms-giving; the Ramdhan fast; the pilgrimage; commending virtue; forbidding vice; war in God's cause; communal solidarity; and obedience to authority.' Kindness to the poor and needy was added as an afterthought: with an appeal to his people not to follow in the ways of the wicked, who do evil and expect salvation, for 'expectations are the capital of the bankrupt'. His governors and Qadhis were ordered to read this message in all the mosques of the country, and to repeat the reading of it every two months.

Apart from such exhortations and the special attention he paid to the selection of unimpeachable officials for the various provincial and district appointments, Faisal, and indeed his father, never seem to have had any specific machinery for harnessing religious enthusiasm to the secular activities of the State: as their great ancestors had had in 'Wahab's rebel horde', and as Faisal's grandson was to have in the *Ikhwan* of the present century. Their military arrangements were entirely administrative; and the mobilisation of their armies was based on registers, in which the obligations of every town, village and tribe to supply men, camels and horses for the various kinds of muster were duly recorded and fully understood by those concerned. In principle arms and ammunition were supplied by the State, when necessary, but the mustered men had to bring their own

camels (in some cases two men to one camel) or go afoot, while horsemen had special inducements. In fact every serving man was, as it were, paid out of the proceeds of his service: in that when booty was captured from the enemy, one fifth of the whole was allotted to the State Treasury, and the rest was divided among the troops in the proportion of one share to the camel-riders and footmen and two to the cavaliers.

The normal programme of life in Najd envisaged a camping or campaigning season during the winter and spring of every year, and a period of recess during the hot summer months, though it is surprising how often we hear of military activities being prolonged into the season of heat, or even being begun in such unfavourable conditions. In the case of punitive expeditions against the tribes, the reason was probably that, while in the winter, especially in seasons of bounteous rains, they were liable to be scattered over a wide area of the desert, they were certain to be concentrated near wells in the summer, when their cattle had to be watered more frequently. And it may be that in operations against the Turks the effect of the climate on the enemy was taken into consideration as a factor favouring the Arabs in a summer campaign.

The history of the first eight years of Faisal's second period, with some incidents of which Ibn Bishr deals in the greatest detail from the standpoint almost of an eye-witness, may be summarised here in a series of tableaux, giving a more generalised picture of the situation in Najd in the fifth decade of the nineteenth century. In the first place Faisal was little troubled by impacts on his realm from outside; and the only case of attempted aggression by a foreign Power occurred in April 1847, when the Sharif of Mecca, Muhammad ibn 'Aun, marched on the Qasim. Certain elements from that province, living in voluntary exile in the Hijaz owing to their hostility to the Sa'udi régime, had suggested to the Sharif that, if he attacked Najd in the interests of Khalid ibn Sa'ud, himself a refugee in Mecca, Faisal would not contest his occupation, or would not find sufficient local support for serious resistance. At first at any rate all went well for the invaders, who were accompanied by Khalid and a contingent of Turkish troops. The people of the Qasim, who had always been partial to the idea of independence under some form of Turkish protection, and had in particular a long-standing grudge against 'Abdullah

ibn Rashid, whose loyal support of Faisal was notorious, submitted to the Sharif and his force without any show of opposition. The chiefs of the Mutair and other tribes also hastened to throw in their lot with the invaders.

But Faisal's reaction to these developments was far from being what the Sharif's supporters had predicted. His son, 'Abdullah, was despatched with a rapidly organised force from the central and southern provinces to Majma'a, where he would cover Sudair and the Tuwaiq districts against any enemy advance. On hearing of this, Sharif Muhammad ibn 'Aun sent a messenger to Faisal, assuring him of his peaceful intentions! And Faisal responded in the traditional manner by sending his brother, 'Abdullah ibn Turki, to the Sharif with gifts, which, on the advice of ill-disposed persons whose only desire was to precipitate a conflict, were rejected, while their bearer was given valuable gifts for himself and told to go back and tell his brother that he should come in person. These gifts were in turn sent back with a challenging message as soon as 'Abdullah was out of reach of pursuit; and when he reached Shaqra he sent news of what had passed to Faisal, remaining there to await his orders. Faisal, interpreting the Sharif's conduct as a declaration of war, immediately set out for Shaqra with the forces he had meanwhile collected at Riyadh in case of need; and instructions were sent to his son at Majma'a to join him at the rendezvous. The Sharif appears now to have become seriously alarmed, and sent a messenger to Faisal, who had then reached the hamlet of Shams on the Washm border, proposing permanent peace and friendship. To this Faisal agreed on the understanding that the Sharif should unconditionally relinquish all claims to jurisdiction in the Qasim or in the tribal areas of Najd. To sweeten the pill he sent valuable presents, including a large sum of money, which the Sharif on his return to Mecca may well have represented to the Turks as tribute collected from a vassal. At any rate he departed from the Qasim in June: raiding a section of the Mutair at al Haid on the way, and apparently allowing the Turks of his force to carry off some of their women-folk. At the same time Faisal was raiding a gathering of al Shamir and other Badawin at the watering of al Banna' near Quai'iya, before returning home and disbanding his army.

The only other 'foreign' contact of these early years of Faisal's reign involved hostilities on a limited scale with the Khalifa

rulers of Bahrain. In 1843 Faisal had led his forces to the Persian Gulf coast in the neighbourhood of Qatif, and had made successful raids on the Manasir, Al Murra and Bani Hajir tribes, when he turned upon Dammam, which was held by Bahrain elements under 'Abdullah ibn Khalifa of the Bahrain ruling family. After a siege of less than a fortnight the defenders surrendered unconditionally, and Faisal, having appropriated all the stores and munitions in the fort, garrisoned it with a force of a hundred men with ample provisions and munitions to resist any attempt of the Bahrain folk to recover it. At this time a tribal battle was being fought out between the 'Ajman and Subai' on one side and the Mutair of Muhammad al Duwish on the other. The latter were soundly defeated; and Muhammad visited Faisal at Dammam to demand redress for the losses incurred by himself and his people, though it would seem that the Mutair were in the position of aggressors as the incident took place in Bani Khalid territory. Faisal however somewhat generously made good a great part of Muhammad's losses out of State assets, recently acquired from the Dammam fort. Soon afterwards he moved to Hufhuf for a prolonged visit, during which he received visits from people as far afield as the 'Uman province, and made various dispositions for the better administration of the Gulf area: including the appointment of Ahmad al Sudairi to the Amirate of al Ahsa, and that of 'Abdullah ibn Sa'd al Madawi to rule Qatif.

After his return to Riyadh at the beginning of the summer of 1844, 'Abdullah al Madawi sent for the former governor of Qatif, 'Ali ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ghanim, and had him beaten for various misdemeanours, including that of being a Shia' and having intelligence with Bahrain. His death as the result of such treatment annoyed Faisal, who despatched one of his slaves, Bilal ibn Salim al Harq, to supplant al Madawi and send him in custody to Riyadh. There however he seems to have satisfied his master that he had acted in good faith; and he was reinstated in his post, to engage in hostilities with Bahrain, and the 'Ama'ir folk, of which we know no more than that there was some stiff fighting. An expedition was also sent by Faisal to 'Uman under 'Abdullah ibn Battal al Mutairi, who was accompanied by the newly appointed Qadhi of Buraimi, Shaikh Nasir ibn 'Ali al 'Uraini; but in the following year al Mutairi was back in al Ahsa as commander of the provincial troops under

Ahmad al Sudairi. And towards the end of 1847 another expedition was sent to 'Uman under 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Ibrahim of Manfuha, who had specific instructions to establish himself at Buraimi, with a garrison drawn from al Ahsa. Almost immediately afterwards trouble broke out in this area owing to the intrigues of various local chiefs; and Faisal was constrained to send yet another expedition, under Sa'd ibn Mutlaq al Mutairi, a cousin of 'Abdullah ibn Battal, to deal with the situation. Ibn Tahnun, the principal disturber of the peace, mustered his supporters and planned to waylay the expedition *en route*, while certain loyal chiefs, including Maktum of Dubai and Sultan ibn Saqr of Sharqa, sent a messenger to its commander to warn him of the projected ambush. Unfortunately the messenger failed to make contact with the advancing force, which walked straight into the trap set for it, and was badly mauled in the desperate encounter which ensued. The survivors of the battle suffered further casualties from thirst in their flight to Dubai, whence they reached Sharqa. Soon after this battle of al 'Anika (the sandhills) Sa'd al Mutairi and his allies concerted an attack on Buraimi, capturing Ibn Tahnun's fort and all the other strong points in the oasis, and recovering all the booty that had been taken in the ambush. Sa'd al Mutairi was held to account for this disaster and eventually, in November 1849, dismissed from his command.

It will be seen that the Persian Gulf coast provided one of the principal preoccupations of Faisal during these years. From Buraimi in the south to Qatif and the Bani Khalid country in the north there was need of constant alertness against would-be disturbers of the peace. And at the end of 1845 the 'Ajman under Falah ibn Hithlain had perpetrated a shocking attack on the pilgrim caravan passing through al Ahsa on the way to Mecca, in spite of the fact that it was accompanied, in the capacity of guide and guarantor, by Hizam ibn Hithlain of Falah's own family.

Faisal set out in person to Huraimila, which he had appointed as the rendezvous of his forces, including the Ha'il contingent under Mit'ab ibn 'Abdullah ibn Rashid, the second son of Faisal's old friend. Moving *via* Kadhima, Faisal established his headquarters by the Mujazzal ridge on the eastern flank of Tuwaiq: where he was visited by considerable elements of the offending 'Ajman tribe, who declared their desire to disassociate

themselves entirely from Falah ibn Hithlain's group. Their request for immunity was granted on the condition that they should quit the Bani Khalid territory, in which Ibn Hithlain had taken up his position for the coming fight; and the Mutair under Humaidi ibn Faisal al Duwish were directed to occupy the Sirr depression. Falah now fled to join the Qahtan chief, Muhammad ibn Hadi ibn Qarmala, in his camp at Khafs: but learning of Faisal's approach to attack him, he fled to the Malaiba section of Mutair to ask for asylum and support. This was refused by the sectional chief, Mandil ibn Ghunaiman, who sent to apprise his superior, Humaidi al Duwish, of the situation. The latter immediately arrived, and took Falah into protective custody, pending negotiations with Faisal on his future. The latter insisted that he must be handed over for punishment for the raid on the pilgrims; and sent a force back with Humaidi to arrest him. He was carried captive to Hufhuf and delivered up to Ahmad al Sudairi, who had him put to death. His principal associates in the attack on the pilgrims and in other acts of aggression and highway robbery, namely Mash'an ibn Hadhdhal and Hadi ibn Midhwad, were also rounded up and slain; while the tribe as a whole made submission to the Government and was made to disgorge all the booty it had acquired. Incidentally Ibn Bishr records that he had the honour of presentation to Faisal in his camp at Mujazzal during these operations, and gives us an intimate picture of the court routine, revolving round the hours of prayer and the sermons and lectures provided for the relaxation of the armed forces.

With the successful termination of this punitive expedition towards the end of 1846, the scene was now set for a serious attempt to settle accounts with the rulers of Bahrain, whose activities and quite plausible, though unacceptable, claims to jurisdiction at various points on the main land were a constant source of trouble and unrest in the area. Owing however to preoccupations in various other parts of the country, it was not until the beginning of December 1850 that Faisal was free to turn his attention once more to the east. His son 'Abdullah, who was then at Shaqra watching developments in the Qasim, was summoned to join him at Rumhiya on the western edge of the Dahna. Faisal now led his whole force into the Hasa province, visiting the watering of Najabiya, and camping at Hulaiwin, between the main oasis and Qatif, where his army was

augmented by the Hasa and Qatif contingents and the tribal arrays of Bani Hajir, Al Murra and the loyal section of 'Ajman under Hizam ibn Hithlain. His original intention had been to deal with Bahrain owing to internal troubles on the islands and the withholding of the prescribed tribute. The attempt of the Khalifa rulers to turn away his wrath with fair words and promises was roughly rejected; and Faisal marched on the Qatar peninsula, at the base of which he set up his camp at 'Uraiq al Salwa. His objective was the fort of Bida' at the port of Dauha, which was in the possession of 'Ali ibn Khalifa, brother of the Shaikh of Bahrain, who had provided it on a lavish scale with food and munitions in case of trouble. Faisal detached his son 'Abdullah to lay siege to the fort; but 'Ali anticipated him by flight in the dhows he had at his disposal in the harbour. The people of Dauha immediately made their submission to 'Abdullah, who was well content to take over the rich stores in the fort with so little trouble: to say nothing of the final eviction of the Khalifa from their last stronghold on the mainland.

But Faisal was apparently not satisfied with this achievement, and moved immediately to the wells of Musaimir near the coast, whose fort was duly occupied by Ahmad al Sudairi. Here there were no fewer than 300 ships in the roadstead, which Faisal now made ready for a naval attack on Bahrain itself under the command of the exiled sons of 'Abdullah ibn Khalifa who were with him. Meanwhile the chief of Bahrain had appealed for help to Sa'id ibn Tahnun of Abu Dhabi, whom we have already met as the victor of al 'Anika; and he was soon on his way with a strong fleet to intervene in the struggle. On his approach to Qatar however, he seems to have lost heart; and sent a message to Faisal proposing to arrange a permanent peace between him and the Khalifa family. Faisal insisted on his appearance in person to make submission; and this was easily arranged on Ahmad al Sudairi's personal guarantee of his immunity from arrest or punishment. After some discussion Faisal agreed to make peace with Bahrain on condition of the payment of the tribute outstanding, though he did not press for an indemnity. Matters were thus settled to the satisfaction of all concerned, without a drop of blood shed from beginning to end of the expedition. It was now June or July of 1851, and Faisal's return across the desert sands in the summer heat might have cost his army many casualties had it not been for an

extraordinary fall of rain, accompanied by floods in all the wadis on the way to al Ahsa.

Among the preoccupations which had delayed this settlement with the rulers of Bahrain was the situation in the Qasim. After the abortive invasion of Sharif Muhammad ibn 'Aun in 1847, Faisal had forgiven the Qasim chiefs their part in the episode; but he could scarcely help having suspicions of the latent disloyalty of some of them. In the case of the Amir of 'Anaiza, Ibrahim ibn Sulaiman ibn Zamil, these suspicions were played upon by hostile factions in the city itself. In these circumstances he decided to dismiss the Amir, and to appoint one Nasir ibn 'Abdul-Rahman al Suhaimi in his place. The change was duly made, and the new governor established his brother Mutlaq al Dhurair in the great fort with a suitable garrison, while the townsfolk outwardly at least accepted the new régime. Ibrahim's nephew, 'Abdullah ibn Yahya ibn Sulaiman, and his friends had however no intention of submitting to such a slight on their family; and their hirelings attacked al Suhaimi one night in the street, firing three shots at him, one of which wounded him severely. But 'Abdullah ibn Yahya found the fort securely guarded, and fled to Buraida and the protection of its Amir, 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad. The latter sent news of the matter to Faisal, excusing the crime on the ground of al Suhaimi's provocative conduct. Faisal however insisted on the despatch of 'Abdullah to Riyadh, where he remained pending investigation of the matter.

Meanwhile Dhurair had had one of the followers of the Zamil family beaten to death; and Nasir himself, having recovered from his wound, arrested his predecessor, Ibrahim ibn Sulaiman ibn Zamil, and put him to death. The latter's brother 'Ali fled to Mudhrib, and Faisal ordered al Suhaimi to present himself at Riyadh for the trial of the case before the Shar' court, which prescribed the customary compensation for the murders and the woundings. Faisal, fearing that the internecine strife might lead to more serious complications and perhaps an appeal to the Sharif of Mecca, deposed al Suhaimi and sent 'Abdullah al Madawi, formerly governor of Qatif, to assume the governorship of 'Anaiza. Mutlaq al Dhurair however refused to vacate the fort, and al Madawi proceeded to Buraida. When the news of this development reached Riyadh, al Suhaimi persuaded Faisal that the only way to stop the trouble at 'Anaiza was to reinstate

him in his post, and to support him by a military demonstration towards the southern border of the Qasim. On his arrival at 'Anaiza however al Suhaimi threw in his lot with the people of the town, whom he found in a rebellious mood and ready to challenge the authority of Faisal. It was however generally agreed that their chances of success were slight unless they could persuade the whole province, and particularly 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad of Buraida, to join their cause. The latter was invited to take command of the provincial forces, and agreed to do so on the understanding that there should be no back-sliding once the die was cast for rebellion.

Meanwhile Faisal had left Riyadh at the head of his levies about the beginning of April 1849, with his sons 'Abdullah and Muhammad, while his third son Sa'ud, who had been appointed Amir of al Kharj in 1847, joined him *en route* with the levies of his province. He was also accompanied by his brother Jiluwi and Shaikh 'Abdul-Latif, a great-grandson of Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab, while his brother 'Abdullah ibn Turki remained behind at Riyadh as his deputy. Marching by way of Banban and al Hassi, where he remained some time to assemble his troops, and where he received confirmation of the revolt of the Qasim, he made for Sudair and Majma'a. Here he was visited by Ibn Bishr, who records being present at a great gathering in Faisal's tent after the afternoon prayers, when the chaplain read a passage from Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Wahhab's *Tauhid*, or 'Unitarianism', on the subject of infidelity. From Majma'a the next day Faisal proceeded to Juraifa in the Hamada plain, whence he passed in turn to Ushaiqir and the Sirr district: spending some time at Sajir before continuing his march to Mudhnib, whence he detached a strong force under Muhammad ibn Ahmad al Sudairi, the governor of Sudair, to occupy the oasis of 'Aushaziya, only a short distance from 'Anaiza. He then sent a warning to the Qasim folk against persistence in their course of rebellion: in reply to which the rebels sent one of the notables of Buraida, Muhanna ibn Salih, to discuss matters with him.

Faisal seemed optimistic that matters might be settled without bloodshed. But after the departure of Muhanna to report on his talks, news came in of a concentration of Dahamsha ('Anaza) Badawin at Tarafiya to the eastward of Buraida. Faisal despatched his son 'Abdullah with a strong force to raid

them, warning him at the same time not to engage in hostilities with any elements of the Qasim population, as he had promised them immunity from molestation in the message sent by Muhammad. Accordingly a caravan bound for Buraida was allowed to pass in peace; but the news of 'Abdullah's expedition spread to Tarafiya, whence the Dahamsha Arabs had fled before his arrival. They were however pursued and roughly handled, while some of their fugitives reached 'Anaiza to give the alarm. 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad had no difficulty in persuading his associates that such an opportunity of striking a blow for freedom was not likely to recur; and off he started with a force of about 1,500 strong to take up a position in the dunes of al Yatima, between Shamasiya and Ta'miya in the channel of Wadi Rima. Meanwhile 'Abdullah had sent a message to his father from Tarafiya, announcing his successful action against the Dahamsha; but the messenger, noticing the spoor of a large army proceeding eastwards, had returned with the news to 'Abdullah. His advisers recommended giving the rebels a wide berth on the way back to Faisal, but 'Abdullah insisted on engaging them in spite of their great superiority in numbers. The sheep and camels captured from the Dahamsha were driven straight towards the enemy position, as a screen for the striking force of cavalry, whose dashing charge seems to have settled the issue there and then: the rebels retreating as they fought, but soon in headlong flight. 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad escaped to the safety of the Ta'miya fort, whence he proceeded to 'Anaiza when he knew that 'Abdullah had called off the pursuit and returned to Mudhnib. Thither the news of his victory had preceded him to the great relief of his father, who had given orders for reinforcements to be sent to him, and of the whole army, whose jubulations were however cut short by Faisal's order to stop the idle dancing and singing and give praise and thanks to God for his signal mercies.

Practically every village of the Qasim had reason to mourn the loss of some local hero, but it was the Buraida contingent which appropriately enough had suffered most severely, in a total casualty list of about a hundred killed. 'Abdul-'Aziz had entered 'Anaiza prancing and singing with his followers to encourage his allies to maintain the fight; but he soon realised that the people of the town had had enough of it, and were ready to make submission to Faisal. He therefore went off to Buraida,

while al Suhaimi fled for refuge to Talal ibn Rashid who was then at Qarara on the way to support Faisal against the rebels. Incidentally Talal had succeeded his father 'Abdullah ibn Rashid as Amir of Hail on the latter's death in May 1847, at the time of the Sharif's invasion of the Qasim. The folk of 'Anaiza now held counsel to determine their future action; and Shaikh 'Abdullah abu-Butaiyin, the provincial Qadhi, was approached to intervene with Faisal for his forgiveness. He agreed to this very reluctantly only on the condition that Muhammad ibn 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Bassam, the head of one of the leading patrician families of the town should stand surety against any possible back-sliding on their part.

Matters were now easily arranged, and Faisal entered 'Anaiza to receive the submission of its citizens and to forgive them their part in the disloyalty of the province. He then sent a message to 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad offering him the choice between peace and war. He had decided to flee, but his relatives and the notables of Buraida persuaded him to let them intercede for Faisal's mercy; and after long discussions and the intervention of influential persons, Faisal agreed to let bygones be bygones, and confirmed him in the local governorship of the town. But, to guard against similar occurrences in the future in a notoriously unstable and unreliable community, he decided to appoint his brother Jiluwi as governor-general of the whole province with headquarters in the great fort of 'Anaiza: the first 'foreigner' and royal prince to hold an office hitherto reserved for local notables, and incidentally the great-grandfather of 'Abdullah ibn Musa'id the present incumbent of the post, which had also previously been held in turn by his uncle, the famous 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi, and his father 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Musa'id, the present governor of Hail. Faisal had thus introduced a new administrative principle, which was to be adopted intermittently for more than a century.

After a sojourn of a month at 'Anaiza, and a meeting with Talal ibn Rashid at Mudhnib on the way home, Faisal returned to Riyadh. But he was soon in action again in the following winter (1849/50); marching north to attack a gathering of 'Ataiba at Jarab. They had got wind of his intentions, and retreated to Qubba, where large elements of the Mutair were also assembled. As Faisal approached, the Duwish chiefs visited him with presents, and obtained his general forgiveness for their past

activities: whereupon Faisal turned towards the Qasim, and was joined at the watering of Abal-Dud on its northern frontier by Jiluwi with his Qasim levies. 'Abdul-'Aziz of Buraida appears to have been alarmed by these movements, and fled incontinently to Mecca with his sons, while abandoning his women-folk and all his possessions. Faisal now arrived at Buraida, where he left all the belongings of the fugitive governor untouched with the remaining members of his family, and appointed his brother, 'Abdul-Muhsin Al Muhammad, as governor in his place: after which he returned to Riyadh.

The Sharif of Mecca had received 'Abdul-'Aziz with a great show of sympathy and friendliness; but this mood soon changed when he realised that the small gifts which the fugitive had brought were all that he possessed in the world. He now began to correspond with Faisal on the subject of his unwanted guest, to whose pleas for help he replied quite brutally that the soldiers he had at his disposal were not the sort to go fighting unless paid, and paid in advance. At this juncture, towards the end of October 1850 'Abdullah ibn Faisal had set out from Riyadh with a large force, augmented at intervals on his way, on a general foray in the direction of the Hijaz. Having sojourned a while at Quai'ya, he went off in search of the 'Ataiba camps of Marzuq al Haidhal. Passing by way of the Shabaka wells and the watering of Maslub in the Nir uplands, he drew blank at al Hanaij, but nearly came up with his quarry at the Tha'l wells in al Hazm, whence they had only just fled, on hearing of his advance, to the protection of Ibn Rubai'an, one of the paramount 'Ataiba chiefs, at Nifi. The approach of the Wahhabi host to the Hijaz border at Marran in the volcanic region of Harrat al Kishb had alarmed the Hijaz; and the Sharif, fearing that the presence at Mecca of 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad might lead to trouble, began to make things uncomfortable for him. The latter now realised that his expectations of support from his host were negligible; but he sought his intervention with Faisal to secure his forgiveness and permission for his return to Buraida. Faisal was at this time on the Persian Gulf coast dealing with the Bahrain folk; and it must be admitted that he was a man of extraordinary compassion and long-suffering. At any rate he accepted the Sharif's appeal on condition that 'Abdul-'Aziz should proceed to 'Anaiza and join the expedition which Jiluwi was preparing

to lead down to Salwa in support of his operations. He duly arrived at Faisal's camp in January 1851 and, having humbly admitted and expressed contrition for all his crimes against his sovereign, was forgiven and reinstated in the post of governor of Buraida.

Early in the following year rumours were current of another invasion of Najd, projected by Muhammad 'Ali's grandson, 'Abbas ibn Tusun, now viceroy of Egypt. In fact a considerable number of troops were sent to Madina, possibly owing to the recent appearance of 'Abdullah ibn Faisal and his Wahhabi hordes in the neighbourhood of the Hijaz frontier. The military activities which followed their arrival were however of the usual desultory nature, though one raid in May reached as far as Dafina. Faisal mobilised his troops as a precautionary measure, and marched to Majma'a; but in July the news came through that 'Abbas had despatched a large army to the 'Asir province, and ordered the troops in Madina to join it for the operations contemplated in that area. There was relief in Najd at this development; and Faisal, raiding a section of the Mutair at Umm al Jamajim on his way home, disbanded his army.

The Turks fared ill in their campaign against the tribes of 'Asir, whose chief, 'Aidh ibn Mir'i, hastened to identify his cause with that of Faisal by sending a deputation to him with the good news and with presents representing his share of the booty. But Faisal was too busy with affairs in the east to concern himself about the Hijaz, even if he had wished to do so. He himself spent part of the winter of 1852/3 in the desert, raiding another section of Mutair at Wafra from his spring camp at Rumah. But it was 'Abdullah, to whom he entrusted the task of dealing with Al Murra elements which had been disturbing the peace of al Ahsa, and had recently captured a valuable caravan proceeding from 'Uqair to Hufhuf. He inflicted severe losses on them in their camp at Na'riya; and proceeded thence to Salwa, where he successfully raided the Na'im of Qatar and sections of Bani Hajir and Manasir associated with their activities. He now disbanded part of the forces with him, and marched with the rest on 'Uman to show the flag there, and to assure himself that all was well in the district, where there had been signs of sporadic internal dissensions. It was not till September 1853 that he returned home from this expedition; and it was at about this time, or early in the following year, that

news was received at Riyadh of the assassination of 'Abbas Pasha in Egypt and the accession of his uncle Sa'id Pasha, son of Muhammad 'Ali, as viceroy.

By May 1854 Faisal's attention was claimed by a recrudescence of trouble in the Qasim. The people of 'Anaiza had risen against and expelled Jiluwi from the town; and he had retired to Buraida, whither he was shortly followed by the distinguished Shaikh, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Rahman abu-Butaiyin, who was by now completely disgusted by the chronic factiousness of his cure. Thereupon 'Abdullah ibn Yahya ibn Sulaiman, whose branch of the family is known as Al Sulaim, had usurped the governorship of the town; while Faisal, on hearing the news, mobilised his army and sent a strong force under 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Ibrahim of Manfuha to Buraida, with instructions to isolate 'Anaiza by cutting off its communications with the rest of the world. At the end of August Faisal sent his son 'Abdullah to Shaqra, where the territorial units had been ordered to meet him; and about a fortnight later he made a heavy raid on the Wadi Rima hamlets and palm-groves belonging to the folk of 'Anaiza, capturing all their possessions and cattle, and killing about ten of the inhabitants. He now ordered the wholesale cutting down of the palm-groves in the valley; but at this point a sortie of the 'Anaiza folk intervened, and after a stiff fight 'Abdullah withdrew to 'Aushaziya, whence he marched to Ruba'iya, which he made his headquarters for the time being, and where he was joined by Talal ibn Rashid with the Hail forces. 'Abdullah now began to manœuvre for a determined attack on 'Anaiza itself; but the skirmishing normal to such situations had not gone far when 'Abdullah Al Sulaim decided to sue for peace, appealing direct to Faisal for forgiveness. The latter insisted on his appearance at Riyadh in person; but readily forgave him his transgressions, and even appears to have acquiesced in his remaining as governor of 'Anaiza. At any rate 'Abdullah, who was ordered to return with his troops, was accompanied to Riyadh by Jiluwi, while Shaikh abu-Butaiyin went with them as far as his native town of Shaqra. This was in January 1855, after which Najd seems to have enjoyed an uneventful existence for nearly two years, during which Ibn 'Isa has nothing to record except the continuance of good seasonal rains, and the troubles of the Muntafiq tribe in 'Iraq, which was brought under direct Turkish administration

by Mustafa Pasha, owing to the factious conduct of rival members of the Sa'dun family: striving to secure for themselves the chieftainship of the tribe.

In the winter of 1856/7 we find 'Abdullah ibn Faisal raiding against the 'Anaza and 'Ataiba in various parts of the desert, while a year later the Buraih section of Mutair attacked a gathering of the 'Anaiza townsfolk at the watering of Dath, and appropriated their flocks and herds. In this same winter the Mutair suffered a great loss in the death of their chief, Humaidi ibn Faisal ibn Watban al Duwish; while at the end of March 1857 the death occurred of Muhammad ibn 'Aun, the Sharif of Mecca, at the age of seventy. He was succeeded by his eldest son 'Abdullah. The 'Ataiba and Harb were at each other at about this time in the neighbourhood of the Saq hill in northern Qasim: the former getting the worst of the fight, and suffering again later in the year in a sustained raid by 'Abdullah ibn Faisal, which reached as far west as the Buqum and Subai' territory around Turaba and Khurma. But the principal event of this year was the outbreak of a severe epidemic of plague, which entered Najd by way of Bahrain and al Ahsa, and carried off a large number of victims.

It will be remembered that during the Qasim rebellion of 1847, the two principal ringleaders of the movement, 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad and Nasir al Suhaimi, had fled to Buraida. The subsequent adventures of the former up to his reinstatement by Faisal in the governorship of Buraida have already been related; but all we know about al Suhaimi since his flight is that he was murdered during the winter of 1858 in circumstances which serve well to illustrate the dynastic feuds of these city-States of central Arabia in the old days. It was Nasir's grandfather, with his son 'Abdul-Rahman, who had migrated from Ushaiqir in Washm to settle down in 'Anaiza with a Subai' family known as Al Bakr, which had pretensions to the chieftainship of the town, then held by Sulaim (or Sulaiman). The latter's son Yahya was the Amir when Nasir al Suhaimi came to man's estate, and was supported by the Al Bakr as a more suitable candidate for the chief office. Things reached a sufficiently serious stage for Yahya to discuss the position with the pretender, whom he generously enough offered the choice between the Amirate and voluntary exile, on the understanding that, if he chose the former, he himself would migrate from the

town. 'That', he declared, 'was the practice in the days of chaos that followed Dar'iyā before the rise of Turki and his pacification of Najd.' Nasir, also apparently a man of generous instincts, was overcome by such an offer of self-sacrifice in the interests of peace and the community, and roundly refused to consider the proposal: declaring that under God Yahya was the rightful ruler, and pledging his loyalty.

Thus the arrangements for the administration of 'Anaiza remained unchanged; and when Yahya was killed at Baqa'a in 1841, his brother 'Abdullah ibn Sulaim had succeeded him in the natural course. He in turn was killed in battle with Ibn Rashid in 1845, and the reversion of the Amirate fell to the third brother Ibrahim ibn Sulaim, who however was dismissed from office by Faisal three years later in favour of Nasir al Suhaimi, apparently at the latter's suggestion. This development stirred the embers of the old family feud; and 'Abdullah and Zamil, the sons respectively of Yahya and 'Abdullah, attempted the assassination of Nasir in the streets of 'Anaiza, though they failed to kill him and also to occupy the fort, which was occupied by Nasir's brother Mutlaq al Dhurair. The latter had one of the followers of the Sulaim family beaten to death, while Nasir himself, when recovered from his wound, slew Ibrahim ibn Sulaim. Whether Nasir returned to 'Anaiza during the governorship of Jiluwi or not, we do not know; but he was certainly living there, as a private citizen, with his brother Mutlaq towards the end of 1858 under the Amirate of 'Abdullah ibn Yahya, who had usurped the post after the rising against Jiluwi, and had been confirmed in it by Faisal. One day that winter Nasir had sallied forth to Hilaliya, higher up the valley of Wadi Rima, to inspect the horses of his stud, when 'Abdullah, the Amir, and his cousins Zamil ibn 'Abdullah and Hamad ibn Ibrahim tracked him down and killed him in the desert in revenge for his assassination of Ibrahim ibn Sulaim. Nasir's brother Mutlaq fled to his home village of Ushaiqir where, we are told, he remained till he died in 1861. He apparently made no attempt to exact vengeance for his brother: nor does the matter seem to have occasioned any action on the part of Faisal. On the other hand he had become dissatisfied with the conduct of his old enemy, 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad the Amir of Buraida, whom he had certainly treated with great generosity on more than one occasion. He summoned him to Riyadh now,

in February 1859, and after confronting him with a record of his misdeeds detained him and his two sons, who had accompanied him, at the capital, while a distant kinsman of his, 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn 'Adwan of the 'Alaiyan family, was appointed governor of Buraida in his place. The new governor was however assassinated in the following September by members of his own clan; and his predecessor, suspected of being privy to the plot, was thrown into the dungeon by Faisal who, strangely enough, nominated one of the assassins, Muhammad ibn Ghanim, as the new governor. Rumours of impending trouble at Buraida encouraged the imprisoned 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad to offer his services to Faisal to set things right; and somewhat trustingly he accepted the offer, and reappointed him as governor in December 1859 in supersession of Ibn Ghanim.

Meanwhile in March of the same year Faisal, then settled in his favourite spring camp at Rumah, had sent his son 'Abdullah raiding against the Buraih section of Mutair, which had been guilty of normal misdemeanours. They were found and roughly handled at Dukhna in southern Qasim; and after making the usual apologies for past misdeeds, and pledging their loyalty, they were allowed to depart. Near the wells of Shubaika they fell in with a raiding party of the Qahtan, which inflicted further losses on them, including several principal persons killed. The victors then committed the indiscretion of paying a visit to 'Abdullah, who showed his displeasure at their behaviour by imprisoning more than a score of their men, appropriating all their horses, some 140 mares, and demanding a heavy indemnity in cash and kind: part of which he paid over to the disgruntled Buraih as blood-money for those who had been killed. In March of the following year (1860) it was the turn of the 'Ajman to incur the wrath of Faisal by a very ill-advised raid on the royal herds of camels in the pastures. The 'Ajman chief was at this time Rakan ibn Hithlain, who had succeeded his father Falah when the latter was executed at Hufhuf after his great raid on the pilgrim caravan: and had been confirmed in the chieftaincy by Faisal after giving the most solemn assurances against any repetition of such offences by his tribe. With this raid on Faisal's own camels on his conscience, he fled to Subaihiya in Kuwait territory, while Faisal proclaimed a *Jihad* and placed 'Abdullah, as usual now, in command of the forces of retribution.

The army assembled at the wells of Dijani, whence 'Abdullah proceeded to Wafra, where he found 'Ajman elements off their guard at night. Having inflicted a severe defeat on them and captured most of their possessions, 'Abdullah followed up the fugitives to Subaihiya, where again he attacked with telling effect: driving the fugitives before him as they raced to join Rakan at his camp at Jahra near the town of Kuwait itself. 'Abdullah arrayed his army at Malah near by, where the 'Ajman chiefs decided to attack him in force, and in the traditional desert fashion: their advancing army being preceded by seven great camels, each bearing a selected beauty of the tribe, unveiled and arrayed in all her finery, to encourage the men to protect the honour of their race. The battle was fought on April 3rd, 1860, and was contested on both sides with the utmost courage and determination; but the 'Ajman were no real match for 'Abdullah's army; and when the day began to go against them they broke and fled in confusion, making for the safety of Kuwait, while 'Abdullah marched to Jahra to occupy the enemy camp, and distribute the spoils in the usual manner. It is said that the 'Ajman lost 700 men killed in the engagement, while the news of 'Abdullah's victory gave as much satisfaction in the marches of 'Iraq as it did at Riyadh, as the 'Ajman raids against Zubair and the environs of Basra had of late been frequent enough to cause serious alarm to the Arab and Turkish authorities. The Wali of Basra and the Amir of Zubair sent deputations with valuable gifts to 'Abdullah with heartfelt congratulations on his exploit.

'Abdullah returned now to Riyadh, where he received a triumphal welcome; while the 'Ajman leaders, defeated but far from crushed, took counsel among themselves for the future. Alone they could not hope to stand against the massed forces of Najd; and their decision was to seek an alliance with the Muntafiq for a large-scale campaign of constant raiding. During the autumn months of the same year they proceeded to harry the marches of Basra, Zubair and Kuwait until Habib Pasha, the Wali of Basra commissioned the Amir of Zubair to assemble as large an army as possible to counter their operations: himself supplying the necessary funds, arms, ammunition and provisions to recruit and keep the force in the field. The first step of the 'Ajman and their allies was to invade the date-gardens of the Shatt al 'Arab and appropriate the date

harvest for themselves with a view to a long campaign against Najd. The Zubair army, supported by Turks and recruits from the Najd tribes, advanced against them and cleared them out of the date areas, whence they retired into the desert, whither they were pursued and brought to action, and again defeated and forced to withdraw to Jahra, Kabida and Kuwaid. Habib Pasha now sought to retaliate against the Muntafiq, who owned much valuable property in the Basra Wilayat, by threatening to seize their lands and palm-groves. At this the Muntafiq chief, Nasir ibn Rashid ibn Thamir ibn Sa'dun, took fright, and wrote to the Wali putting the whole blame for recent activities on the 'Ajman, and excusing his own tribesmen on the specious ground that they were linked with the 'Ajman, only for the purpose of seeking pasture in the Najd deserts for their cattle. After an exchange of messages on the subject, the Wali agreed not to carry out his threat of expropriation, while it would seem that the full support of the Muntafiq alliance had now dwindled down to sporadic elements of the tribe camping with the fugitive 'Ajman in the neighbourhood of Jahra.

Faisal however, on hearing of the intention of the rebels and their allies to attack Kuwait and Najd itself, proclaimed a second *Jihad*, and summoned the town and district levies to assemble at the watering of Hifna in the 'Arma tract, where 'Abdullah arrived towards the end of March 1861 to assume command. Moving thence by way of Wafra, where he was joined by the Mutair and Bani Hajir, he marched on Jahra, where he delivered a dawn attack in force on the confederates. Once again the 'Ajman were decisively defeated, being driven into the sea by the pursuing victors at low water, and drowned in the turning tide. This battle was fought in Ramdhan like that of Wafra, and almost exactly a year later. Great was the booty taken, and the satisfaction of the folk of Basra and Zubair, who again showed their appreciation of 'Abdullah's prowess with princely gifts.

Incidentally he had been accompanied on this expedition by his brother Muhammad, who distinguished himself on the journey home by engaging and slaying a prominent Mutair chief, Himdi ibn Suqaiyan, in the course of a raid made by 'Abdullah on elements of the tribe encamped at Mansaf near Zilfi. This excursion was but the overture to a march on the Qasim, where

'Abdullah camped at Raudhat al Ruba'iya. The approach of his large army struck terror into the uneasy conscience of 'Abdul 'Aziz Al Muhammad, the governor of Buraida, who incontinently fled to 'Anaiza with his three sons and a small band of his servants and henchmen. Receiving no encouragement there, they continued their flight towards Mecca. But 'Abdullah, on hearing of this development, immediately sent troops in pursuit under the command of his brother Muhammad. They caught up the fugitives at the wells of al Shuqaiyqa, and slew 'Abdul-'Aziz and his three sons together with a cousin of his and his two personal slaves, while the rest of the party was allowed to depart in peace. 'Abdullah now proceeded to Buraida to instal a new governor, 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Ibrahim of Manfuha, who had commanded the expedition to the Qasim after the expulsion of Jiluwi in 1854, and to supervise the destruction of the mansions of 'Abdul-'Aziz and his sons. Now, when 'Abdul-'Aziz Al Muhammad had been allowed by Faisal to resume his governorship of Buraida, another of his sons, 'Abdullah, had been detained at Riyadh as a hostage for his father's good conduct; and he had accompanied 'Abdullah on his expedition against the 'Ajman, being with him at Ruba'iya when his father and brothers were killed. He remained with the force on its return to Riyadh, but slipped away in flight before its arrival there. He was however hunted down in the desert, and sent a prisoner to Qatif, where he died in confinement: thus completing the extinction of a chronically disloyal branch of an ancient and distinguished family, which had long been treated with a consideration and long-suffering patience by the liege lord whom it had so often betrayed.

'Abdullah, while at Buraida, had been visited by Talal ibn Rashid, who had not taken part in the 'Ajman campaign, but had now brought down levies in case they might be needed in the Qasim. The humiliation of his old enemy of Buraida must have been a source of much satisfaction to him, while the loyalty of his province to the central government was in striking contrast with the perennial ebullition of treason in the Qasim. The year (1861) was indeed scarcely out when this cockpit of Arabia was again in travail. The death of Ahmad al Sudairi, the Amir of al Ahsa, in the early part of this year was a grievous loss to the ageing Faisal. His place was provisionally filled by his son Muhammad, who had had previous experience of the

province: but events in the Qasim, to be described now, necessitated his appointment as Amir of Buraida; and it was not until the latter part of 1863 that, at the urgent request of the people of al Ahsa, Faisal agreed to his return to that province as substantive Amir.

Meanwhile, in February 1862, for some unexplained reason though it was possibly the result of the policy of the recently appointed governor of Buraida, 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Ibrahim, the people of 'Anaiza rose in rebellion. Faisal immediately countered by giving free permission to the Badawin to attack and plunder the town and its surroundings; while he organised a force to send with one Salih ibn Shilhub to Buraida to help 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Ibrahim in operations against the rebel townsfolk. In April this force appropriated a considerable number of their camels and sheep in the pastures; but the people of 'Anaiza gave as good as they got, and their sorties in force were so frequent that the attack was called off. About this time in May Muhammad ibn Ghanim, one of the assassins of 'Abdullah ibn 'Adwan and his successor for a short time in the Amirate of Buraida, returned to the Qasim from Madina, where he had apparently been in voluntary exile during Ibn Ibrahim's tenure of the office. Being a member of the 'Alaiyan family, with pretensions to the governorship of Buraida, he threw in his lot with the 'Anaiza rebels and encouraged them to attack the rival town. The expedition did succeed in penetrating into the town under cover of night; but it failed to make any headway in its attacks against the castle, held by Ibn Ibrahim and the troops of Salih ibn Shilhub, or the fortified mansions of the rival abal-Khail family, while the citizens of Buraida, as soon as they realised what was happening, surged out into the streets and expelled the invaders with appreciable losses. Faisal now sent strong reinforcements to Buraida to help in maintaining pressure on 'Anaiza, though it was the people of the latter who took the initiative in attacking and routing the defenders on their own ground near the palm-groves of Rawaq: the score or so of fatal casualties inflicted on them including 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz al Dughathir, the officer commanding the recently arrived reinforcements. The continued failure of Ibn Ibrahim to bring the rebels to book infuriated Faisal, who recalled him in disgrace and ordered the confiscation of all his possessions in Buraida, where Salih ibn Shilhub remained in command of the garrison.

After the summer recess, during which the stalemate seems to have continued without any appreciable activity on either side, Faisal decided to adopt more vigorous measures. The army was mobilised again in the autumn, and despatched under the command of his son Muhammad to the Qasim, where it was joined not only by the contingents from Sudair and Washm, but also by the full Hail muster under 'Ubaid ibn Rashid, accompanied by his nephew Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, destined soon to be the outstanding personality of Arabia. Concentrating at Buraida, this formidable army set out for the enemy town, and encountered the advanced force of the rebels at the Wadi Rima crossing, which roughly marked the border between 'Anaiza and Buraida territory. The rebels were defeated with some loss, and Muhammad camped in the wadi, superintending the cutting down of the enemy's palm-groves. A strong sortie of the citizens resulted in a grim battle on December 10th, in which they drove Muhammad's men back to their tents near al Jisr; but a heavy fall of rain prevented them from driving home their advantage by damping their powder, and it was now Muhammad's force that delivered a counter-attack in force, in which they took heavy toll of the 'Anaiza folk, of whom some 400 were killed while the rest took to their heels. The felling of the palms was continued, with the rebels now cooped up in their town: and Muhammad received a welcome addition to his strength with the arrival of Talal ibn Rashid in person with the rest of the Hail contingent. Faisal also sent up his son 'Abdullah in January 1863 with the contingents of al Ahsa and the reserves of other districts, with some guns and mortars. 'Anaiza was now completely invested and subjected to heavy and constant bombardment day after day until the defenders were constrained to sue for peace.

Faisal had already instructed 'Abdullah to accept any offer to surrender on the sole condition that the offending Amir, 'Abdullah ibn Yahya, should accompany him to Riyadh to make his formal submission. Peace was accordingly arranged on this basis; and the rebel Amir, on appearing before Faisal at Riyadh to beg for forgiveness, was duly pardoned and allowed to return home, while Muhammad al Sudairi was posted to Buraida as governor-general of the whole province. Not long afterwards, as already noted, he was recalled for re-appointment to al Ahsa, and the Amirate of Buraida was conferred on

a member of the 'Alaiyan family, Sulaiman al Rashid. But this meant more trouble in the town, and Sulaiman was soon dismissed by Faisal in favour of a member of the rival family of abal-Khail, named Muhanna Al Salih.

In Egypt the viceroy Sa'id Pasha died during the latter part of 1863, and was succeeded by Isma'il Pasha, yet another son of the great Muhammad 'Ali, whose reign was to see the construction of the Suez Canal and other less fortunate vicissitudes, which would open the door to foreign occupation of the country. At about the same time one of the leading Shaikhs of the 'Ataiba tribe, Turki ibn Humaid, also died. And in the autumn of 1864 'Abdullah was on the war-path again in the Hasa province, raiding the various tribes as usual, and incidentally encountering a gathering of the 'Ajman and routing it with heavy losses. Otherwise the rebellion of 'Anaiza seems to have been followed by a twelve-month of comparative peace and tranquillity throughout the realm, during which the celebrated Shaikh 'Abdullah abu-Butaiyin, born at Raudhat al Sudair in November 1779, was gathered to his fathers at his adopted home in Shaqra at the ripe old age of eighty-five. His first ecclesiastical post was that of Qadhi of Taif, to which he was appointed by the Imam Sa'ud in 1805 after his conquest of the Hijaz; while, as we have seen, he had retired into private life on the expulsion of Jiluwi from 'Anaiza, where he had been Qadhi for many years, in January 1855. He had thus held high ecclesiastical office for just half a century.

It is curious that Ibn 'Isa makes no mention of the visit to Riyadh in the spring of 1865 of Colonel Lewis Pelly, the famous British Resident in the Persian Gulf, for conversations with Faisal; though it is perhaps not so strange that he should be silent on the alleged visit of William Gifford Palgrave to the Wahhabi capital two years earlier. It would certainly have been interesting to have some idea of contemporary Wahhabi reactions to these romantic episodes: the first of which at any rate is believed to have resulted in the signing of an Anglo-Arab accord, whose text has however never been traced in the archives of Riyadh. Colonel Pelly has indeed left us an extremely valuable account of the activities and atmosphere of the Wahhabi court in this last year of the Imam Faisal's reign. For many years now he had delegated the active conduct of affairs, and especially the direction of the constant military

operations of the period, to his son 'Abdullah, sometimes in association with his second brother Muhammad, though he had always kept the supreme authority in his own hands and had apparently never considered abdication. It seems fairly clear however that in these latter years his powers were failing; and at long last, on December 2nd, 1865, he died after a reign of thirty-one years, interrupted by an interregnum of five years spent in captivity.

'Abdullah II and Sa'ud III abna Sa'ud

THE death of the Imam Faisal in December 1865 ushered in an era of dissension and strife, which culminated in the total eclipse of the Sa'udi dynasty during the last decade of the nineteenth century. It was already evident at the time of the visit to Riyadh of Colonel Lewis Pelly, the British Resident in the Persian Gulf, in March 1865 that Faisal was failing. And in June of the same year he formally nominated his eldest son, 'Abdullah, as heir to the throne: in which capacity he virtually took over the active governance of the realm. He had already for some twenty years been his father's right-hand man in council and in war, while his younger brother, Sa'ud, does not seem to have made much impression on the annalists of the period until after his father's death, when he lost little time in showing his jealousy of and his animosity towards his brother. The dull wit and solid virtues of the new ruler were to prove no match for the debonair irresponsibility of the pretender, and between them they brought their house crashing down in ruins.

'Abdullah's first act, on ascending the throne, was to build himself a new fortified palace, known as al Mismak, somewhat to the north-east of Turki's original castle, which Faisal had been content to occupy and expand to his needs, and from which the restoration of Wahhabi fortunes was to be directed in due course by the late king, until it in turn was demolished in recent years to make way for a palace more suitable to modern requirements. In the spring he sallied forth to raid the Dhafir tribe on the 'Iraq frontier, with little result but the capture of some camels and sheep. But his attention was soon diverted to more serious matters. Sa'ud, evidently thinking it wiser to keep himself out of his brother's reach, had decamped to the 'Asir province in the mountain-chain of western Arabia, to seek the help of the local baron, Muhammad ibn 'Aïdh, in his contemplated bid for the throne. 'Abdullah immediately sent a deputation to Abha to warn its ruler against any flirting with rebel-

lion, and to invite Sa'ud back to Riyadh on a guarantee of his immunity. But the latter, declining the invitation and failing to receive the desired local support, betook himself to the Makrami chief of Najran. Here he met with better success: his maternal and conjugal associations with the important 'Ajman tribe of the Hasa giving him a local prestige, which soon placed him at the head of a formidable Badawin army, with which he advanced to Sulaiyil in Wadi Dawasir, whose chief had also promised him his support.

The stage was thus set for the first trial of strength between the brothers; and 'Abdullah lost no time in sending his second brother, Muhammad, south with a strong contingent drawn from the towns and tribes of Najd. The main Dawasir settlements had remained loyal and, Sa'ud taking the offensive, the armies met in one of them, Ma'tala. Both sides suffered severe casualties, but victory rested with the loyalists, and Sa'ud, grievously wounded in several places, fled from the field.

After recuperating from his wounds in the desert among the Murra tribe, he betook himself to Buraimi and the marches of 'Uman to settle down for a while as the guest of Turki al Sudairi, the Wahhabi governor. This was at the end of 1866 and it was not till some four years later that he was in a position to trouble the peace of 'Abdullah. Meanwhile Turki was murdered at Sharqa in 1869 while trying to enlist local support for the deposed Sultan of Masqat, Salim ibn Thuwaini; and the inhabitants of Buraimi, who had found his strong administration little to their liking, invited the new usurper of power at Masqat and in 'Uman, 'Azzan ibn Qais, to occupy the oasis. Whether this change of régime affected Sa'ud's plans or not, we find him in the following year visiting Bahrain and receiving support from its rulers, Al Khalifa, for an attack on Qatar, which proved abortive owing to the stout resistance put up by the garrison posted there by 'Abdullah.

Returning to Bahrain, Sa'ud girt up his loins for a more serious venture in the autumn, when, after much correspondence with the 'Ajman tribe, he landed at 'Uqair and advanced on the Hasa oasis. The outlying villages and palm-groves were easily occupied and pillaged; but the commander of the loyalist troops, acting on the advice of some ostensibly loyal 'Ajman shaikhs, sallied out to meet the pretender at the Wajjaj canal,

where they were deserted and attacked by their supposed friends; and their defeat became a rout. The capital, Hufhuf, however put up a strong defence during a siege of forty days, while 'Abdullah at Riyadh gathered his forces to relieve it. His brother, Muhammad, was sent down in command of the relieving force; but Sa'ud decided to meet it in the desert, and had occupied the vital watering of Juda before Muhammad could reach it. The battle of Juda was fought on December 1st, 1870, with fierce determination on both sides, and the casualties were heavy; but the result was a resounding victory for the arms of Sa'ud, and Muhammad was sent a prisoner to Qatif for incarceration. The Hasa submitted without further ado, and Sa'ud was master of all eastern Arabia, controlling all the supply routes of Riyadh itself.

Now, during the years of Sa'ud's self-imposed exile at Buraimi, important developments had occurred in Najd. 'Abdullah's first acts after the battle of Ma'tala had been directed against those who had supported his brother in rebellion. His uncle, 'Abdullah ibn Turki, was sent down to the Hasa to chastise the 'Ajman; and the provincial governor, Muhammad al Sudairi (the elder brother of Turki at Buraimi), was dismissed from office and replaced by Nasir ibn Jabr al Khalidi. Soon afterwards a full-scale expedition was despatched to Wadi Dawasir to punish the disloyal elements of the oasis and the tribe: 'Abdullah himself assuming command of it and remaining in the neighbourhood about two months to restore his authority. On his return to his capital, his attention was claimed by events in Jabal Shammar, now virtually independent though still paying lip-service to the Sa'udi dynasty. In 1866 the Amir Talal ibn 'Abdullah, afflicted by some mental disorder, had committed suicide, and been succeeded by his brother, Mit'ab. Two years later the latter was murdered at Hail by his predecessor's sons, of whom Bandar ibn Talal assumed the Amirate. At this time another brother of Talal, Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah, happened to be absent at Riyadh on a visit to the Imam 'Abdullah, and deemed it wiser to remain there awhile, watching developments of the situation at Hail. And in the following year Bandar himself visited Riyadh to pay his respects to the Imam, and to persuade his uncle to return home with him on his guarantee of respectful and generous treatment. The House of Ibn Rashid was on the threshold of an appalling tragedy, which was to usher in the

reign of its most distinguished son, undoubtedly one of the great men of Arabian history.

The Najdi historian breaks off at this point (1869) to record the beginning (*sic*) of the digging of the Suez Canal, completed according to him in 1874! '... the promoters thereof', he comments, 'were the French and English Governments and the Khedive Isma'il Pasha. And after its completion they imposed fixed charges on the ships passing through according to their cargo. Now, as regards this digging until the two seas met, Harun al Rashid wanted to do it long ago to facilitate his operations against the Byzantines. But Yahya al Barmaki warned him that, if he did that, the Franks would drive the Muslims from the holy mosque of Mecca. So he refrained from the project!' Twentieth-century Great Power politics have been somewhat more subtle than that.

The Imam 'Abdullah's reaction to the defeat at Juda was disastrous to himself, and ultimately to his country. Expecting an immediate advance on the capital by Sa'ud, he fled precipitately, intending to seek refuge at Hail. While in camp on the way he despatched a deputation to the Pashas of Baghdad and Basra, requesting their urgent assistance in countering the rebellion of his brother. And at the same camp he was visited by the Qahtan chief, Muhammad ibn Hadi ibn Qarmala, who had previously been to see Sa'ud and had been offended by the cool reception accorded him. 'Abdullah snatched desperately at the offer of his services, changed his mind, and returned to Riyadh just in time to discourage Sa'ud from his intended advance thereon.

But the respite was short-lived; and famine, destined to last for two years, added its horrors to those of general anarchy: the corpses of dead asses being consumed by the famished population, of whom large numbers died of starvation. In April 1871 Sa'ud marched on Riyadh, whence 'Abdullah had again fled to the Qahtan country of the south, having despatched a strong force with his provisions, guns and ammunition to meet him at the rendezvous. The whole of this booty fell into the hands of Sa'ud after a sharp fight at Jiza' almost within sight of the capital; and Riyadh itself, which he entered without opposition, was delivered over to pillage and plunder, as also were several villages in the neighbourhood. Sa'ud was now the *de facto* master of Najd in place of his fugitive brother; and his summons to the

leading men of the towns and tribes to come in and take the oath of loyalty to the new régime was promptly obeyed.

By June he was ready to take the field with a large army of Badawin and townsfolk in pursuit of 'Abdullah and his Qahtan allies, who lay at the watering of al Anjal, but had moved to the oasis of Barra, after Sa'ud had passed it on his way to occupy the important province of Washm. The latter, leaving his uncle, 'Abdullah ibn Turki, in charge at Shaqra, turned back to meet the enemy at Barra, where 'Abdullah suffered a decisive defeat: fleeing with his allies to Ruwaidha in the 'Aradh region, whence he made his way to the Hasa to join the Turkish expeditionary force under Fariq Pasha, which had started from Basra in June and had arrived at Hufhuf by way of Qatif, where Muhammad ibn Faisal had been released from prison. The governor appointed by Sa'ud was dismissed, and the Turks gave out that they had only come at 'Abdullah's request to help him against his rebel brother. In fact they had come to stay; and 'Abdullah, though treated with all honour and respect, was their prisoner.

It was doubtless the news of their arrival in the Hasa that had recalled Sa'ud to Riyadh after the battle of Barra. But the people of the capital had not forgotten his rough treatment of them but a few months before; and the presence of the Turks not far off encouraged them to rise against him as soon as he had disbanded the forces which had accompanied him to Barra. For several days he was closely besieged in the castle until he accepted the people's ultimatum to quit Riyadh with his followers under safe conduct. He then proceeded to Dilam, the capital of the Kharj province, while his uncle, 'Abdullah ibn Turki, assumed control at Riyadh.

But Sa'ud had no intention of remaining idle. In September he arrived among his tribal friends in the Hasa, and proceeded to pillage the outlying villages and palm-groves, until the Turks were forced to take notice of his activities. He was severely defeated in a battle at Khuwaira, at which 'Abdullah himself was present. Soon after this, however, it was 'Abdullah's turn to suspect the real intentions of his protectors. Large reinforcements for the Hasa force arrived at 'Uqair a few days after the battle of Khuwaira, and an officer informed him of the existence of a plot to seize and deport him and other members of the family to smooth the way for the incorporation of Hasa in the Ottoman Empire. This was fully in accord with Midhat Pasha's

forward policy in the Arab world; but our annalist is certainly in error in stating that the great man had come down himself with the reinforcements, to see his wishes carried out. Be that as it may, 'Abdullah now realised that he was in a trap, from which escape would be difficult. But a very well conceived stratagem enabled him and his brother and son to give their escort the slip during an afternoon's outing. And, travelling night and day by unfrequented tracks, they were soon entering Riyadh itself amid the acclamations of its people. Less than a year had passed since his flight from the capital after the battle of Juda, and the tables had been completely turned on his brother by a concatenation of circumstances for which he could claim no credit, and for which he had staked and lost the fairest province of his realm.

Sa'ud was again a fugitive, but actively stirring up strife in the southern provinces, where he could always count on some support. The Dawasir of the Aflaj province joined him in large numbers; and 'Abdullah, thinking to forestall any advance by him towards Riyadh, sent his brother, Muhammad, and his uncle, 'Abdullah ibn Turki, with a large force to occupy Dilam. Sa'ud, nothing loth, came up to besiege the town, which was soon after betrayed to him by the inhabitants, weary of their tribulations and privations. Muhammad made good his escape, but 'Abdullah ibn Turki was taken prisoner and died in the Dilam dungeon a few days later. There had never been any love lost between him and Sa'ud; but he seems to have been the only steadying influence at work during the years of anarchy which ensued upon the death of Faisal.

These events appear to have taken place about January 1873; and about two months later Sa'ud, having launched out from Dilam on the war-path, and dealt faithfully with the towns of Dhurma and Huraimila, turned upon Riyadh itself. 'Abdullah came out to meet him, and the issue was settled for good in a second battle at Jiza'. 'Abdullah, with his bodyguard, fled in the direction of Kuwait to spend another period of exile among the Qahtan at the wells of Subaihiya. And Sa'ud reigned in his stead at Riyadh, whither the notables of the surrounding districts flocked to swear loyalty to him for the second time. But the whole of Najd was in a state of hopeless anarchy; and there was much for him to do to stabilise a situation, which could easily be turned against him by any enemy.

He must also have realised the significance of the latest developments at Hail, where towards the end of 1872, Muhammad ibn Rashid had duly avenged the murder of his brother. Bandar ibn Talal, true to his promise made at Riyadh, had appointed Muhammad to the important and lucrative post of conductor of the trans-peninsular pilgrimage between 'Iraq and Mecca. And on this occasion Muhammad was returning from the 'Iraq frontier after safely delivering his charges to the Turkish authorities, when Bandar himself and other princes of the ruling house sallied out to meet him. The size of Muhammad's escort of Dhafir tribesmen seems to have annoyed or alarmed Bandar, and the meeting of uncle and nephew was too cool to be reassuring to either. It was Muhammad who took the initiative by closing on Bandar and cutting him down with his sword. So far at any rate the rules of Arabian chivalry had been duly observed: a murderer had been slain by the lawful avenger of his victim. But Bandar had five brothers, all of whom were now sought out and slain, except one, a child called Naïf, who was spared together with the infant son of Bandar by the wife of Mit'ab, whom he had espoused after murdering her husband. It was 'Abdul-'Aziz, her then infant son by Mit'ab, who was destined to succeed the childless Muhammad himself: *sed longo intervallo*. The curse that rested on the House of Rashid by reason of Talal's suicide had been exorcised by a holocaust of his children. And Charles Doughty was told during his wanderings a few years after this episode that though Muhammad had 'committed crimes which before were not known in the world', yet 'never was the government in more sufficient handling'. The event certainly justified this early estimate of his qualities; and Hail was to be the metropolis of an Arabian empire for a while.

In June 1873 Sa'ud was on the war-path again, seeking out the 'Ataiba in the uplands of Najd and finding them encamped at the wells of Talal. At first the fight went in his favour, but the tribesmen were rallied and reinforced; and the tables were turned on Sa'ud, who suffered heavy losses in men and material. Having recuperated his resources during the autumn, he was back in 'Ataiba territory at the turn of the year, though the annals do not record the nature of his activities there. Meanwhile trouble had been brewing in the Hasa, where, in October 1874, Faisal's youngest son, 'Abdul-Rahman, had arrived from Baghdad. He had probably, though this fact is not recorded,

gone to the Turks as the envoy of 'Abdullah after his second flight from Riyadh to Kuwait territory. Be that as it may, his return to the Hasa seems to have been the occasion of a general rising against the Turkish garrison at Hufhuf. The gate guards were killed, and the new Khizam fort was captured by storm; but the main body of the Turks shut itself up in the Kut castle to stand a siege. A strong relief force of regulars and Badawin levies was immediately despatched from 'Iraq under the command of the Muntafiq chief, Nasir al Sa'dun, who was to take charge of the province as governor. 'Abdul-Rahman sallied out against them to give battle, but was decisively defeated; and Hufhuf was given up to an orgy of pillage and slaughter. The Shia' elements of the population were left unmolested, but everyone suspected of Wahhabi connections or sympathies was attacked in revenge for the Turkish soldiers who had lost their lives. Large numbers were slain, and the amount of booty taken was beyond compute. The leading citizens had saved themselves by flight to Bahrain after the battle, while 'Abdul-Rahman and his companions made for Riyadh. They arrived there just in time to greet Sa'ud, who had returned seriously ill from a raid in the direction of Huraimila, before he died on January 26th, 1875.

Thus ended an unhappy and turbulent chapter in the history of the Sa'udi dynasty, though Sa'ud's sons and their sons in turn were destined to plague the country with sedition for many years to come. 'Abdul-Rahman assumed control of affairs at the capital on behalf of 'Abdullah who was still absent, with his brother Muhammad, in the neighbourhood of Kuwait. Muhammad was, however, sent by 'Abdullah to secure the Washm province; and after some days settling affairs at Shaqra he proceeded to Tharmida. This move seems to have created some misunderstanding at Riyadh, whence 'Abdul-Rahman came posting up with the sons of Sa'ud and a large force of citizens and Badawin. Muhammad and his allies were besieged in Tharmida for some days, and there were casualties on both sides in the fighting that ensued. Before long however a truce was arranged, and friendly relations resumed on Muhammad placing himself at the disposal of his youngest brother, and surrendering his arms and transport. It is just possible, of course, at this stage that 'Abdul-Rahman was contemplating playing for his own hand. His next step was to march to Dawadami; but

he fell in on the way with the 'Ataiba chiefs, also intending to establish themselves there; and he had the worst of a sharp encounter. And even back at Riyadh he was soon in trouble with the turbulent sons of Sa'ud. He was evidently not of the stuff that heroes and administrators are made of, though in due course his more famous son was to find in him a sound and loyal counsellor. At any rate the attitude of Sa'ud's sons decided him to throw in his fortunes with 'Abdullah, whom he rejoined in the eastern desert, leaving Riyadh at the mercy of his nephews for the time being. But when 'Abdullah, accompanied by 'Abdul-Rahman and a considerable force of Badawin, advanced on Riyadh, the pretenders discreetly withdrew to Dilam. And 'Abdullah held court for the third time to receive the congratulations of his subjects and their assurances of loyalty. It was the eighth change in the supreme authority that Riyadh had witnessed since the death of Faisal only eleven years before. The dates and duration of these vicissitudes are not in all cases definitely recorded, but they would seem to be as follows:

2/12/1865 to 9/4/1871.	'Abdullah II ibn Faisal.
10/4/1871 to 15/8/1871.	Sa'ud III ibn Faisal.
15/8/1871 to 15/10/1871.	'Abdullah ibn Turki.
15/10/1871 to 15/1/1873.	'Abdullah II ibn Faisal.
15/1/1873 to 26/1/1875.	Sa'ud III ibn Faisal.
26/1/1875 to 28/1/1876.	'Abdul-Rahman ibn Faisal.
28/1/1876 to 31/3/1876.	The sons of Sa'ud III ibn Faisal.
31/3/1876.	'Abdullah II ibn Faisal.

Now among the visitors to 'Abdullah on this occasion was one Ibrahim ibn 'Abdul-Mushin ibn Mudlij of the 'Alaiyan clan of Buraida seeking redress for the usurpation of the chieftainship of the town by the rival clan of Abal-Khail. In the previous year the head of the latter clan, Muhanna al Salih abal-Khail, who had been Amir of the town for some time, had expelled certain members of the 'Alaiyan family suspected of plotting for his overthrow. Seeking refuge at 'Anaiza for the time being, they had returned to Buraida to lie in wait for Muhanna, whom they murdered as he left his house to attend the Friday prayers. They now seized the Government castle, where they were promptly attacked and closely besieged by the supporters of the dead Amir, led by his son Hasan, who immediately assumed the chiefship of the town. Two other leading members of the abal-Khail clan

were killed by fire from the castle during these proceedings; but the attackers persisted and eventually succeeded in driving a mine under the principal tower and filling it with gunpowder. The explosion brought down the tower, many of its occupants being buried in the ruins or captured and killed by the attackers. Thus Hasan avenged his father's murder.

'Abdullah's visitor, Ibrahim, was not in Buraida at the time; but his father and two brothers were seized and imprisoned by Hasan on the ground that they were corresponding with elements in 'Anaiza to the detriment of his régime. At night however they escaped from the prison, only to be pursued and slain, all except Mudlij, the younger brother who escaped to tell the story. 'Abdullah rather lightly agreed to take action against Hasan al Muhanna; and in due course he reached 'Anaiza with a considerable force to give effect to his decision. Meanwhile Hasan had appealed to Muhammad ibn Rashid, whose prompt arrival at Buraida appears to have cooled the ardour of 'Abdullah. At any rate he broke camp, and returned to Riyadh with nothing accomplished, though the incident is of interest as being the first show of hands, as it were, between Hail and Riyadh.

It was Hasan al Muhanna who, no doubt with the approval of his declared protector, took the offensive against Sa'udi territory, though he suffered defeat and considerable material loss in his attempt to capture the town of Shaqra during the spring months of 1877. But later in the year Hasan joined Muhammad ibn Rashid in a raid against the 'Ataiba in the same neighbourhood; and the crops of the village of Ushaiqir, already badly damaged by a serious invasion of locusts, were pillaged by the passing marauders, who also helped themselves liberally to the ripening dates of the extensive palm-groves. It was now the turn of the 'Alaiyan family, disappointed by the result of their approaches to Riyadh, to try their luck with Ibn Rashid. But the three principal members of the deputation which visited him, including Ibrahim ibn 'Abdul-Muhsin himself, were waylaid and killed by Hasan al Muhanna at Abqariya on their way back to 'Anaiza from Hail.

The only other significant event of 1877 was the death of the Sharif of Mecca, 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn 'Aun, who was succeeded by his brother Husain, to the exclusion of his sons, 'Ali and Muhammad. The visit of Charles Doughty to Hail and the Qasim during this year and the next passes unnoticed

by the record of Ibn 'Isa, who goes out of his way to remark that nothing of note occurred in Najd during the four years 1878 to 1881 inclusive. That may indeed be partly true of 'Abdullah's curtailed dominions. With the Hasa irrevocably lost to the Turks, and the Qasim discreetly left to its independence under the more or less open protection of Muhammad ibn Rashid, to say nothing of the presence in al Kharj of the disgruntled sons of Sa'ud: there was little that 'Abdullah could do to restore the waning prestige of his dynasty.

Meanwhile Muhammad ibn Rashid was more interested in developing his influence northwards to the Jauf oasis and Wadi Sirhan, at which the Turks were nibbling in ostensible support of the Ruwala tribe and its chief, Sattam ibn Sha'lan. A small Turkish force had, somewhat before this time, been sent to garrison Jauf under a face-saving agreement with Muhammad ibn Rashid; but the conduct of the troops had produced a local rising which forced them to retreat. In general the oasis remained loyal to the Hail connection, while Muhammad slowly but surely extended his influence up Wadi Sirhan almost to the Hauran border.

Muhammad was unquestionably the big man of Arabia at this time. Having staved off Turkish expansionism in the north, he shunned every temptation to interfere with their activities in the Hasa and in the Hijaz, in both of which there was considerable dissatisfaction with the directness and completeness of Turkish control. Sharif Husain had fallen a victim to this discontent, being murdered in 1880 on account of his acquiescence in this state of affairs. And the Turks took advantage of the incident to make a dynastic change in the Amirate of Mecca. 'Abdul-Muttalib ibn Ghalib of the Dhawi Zaid line, who had held the post from 1851 to 1856, was recalled to become Amir. This experiment however proved unsatisfactory, and he was deposed in 1882 in favour of 'Aun al Rafiq, another brother of the murdered Husain and his predecessor. He was destined to see the beginning, though not the completion, of the Hijaz railway in the early years of the twentieth century, as he reigned until his death in 1905: leaving behind him a peculiarly pleasant reputation for charm and efficiency.

As for 'Abdullah, Muhammad was content to play him as a cat plays a mouse before devouring it; and indeed all he had to do was to let his inevitable victim pave his own way to perdition.

Not that he did not give full rein to his extraordinary capacity for political intrigue, for there is little doubt that he had sized up every potential weapon in his armoury, and had come to an understanding with the leading personalities of most of the provinces of 'Abdullah's shrunken realm against any crisis that might develop in their affairs.

This was certainly the case with Majma'a and the province of Sudair in general, which came out in assertion of their independence in 1882. 'Abdullah gathered his clans of 'Aridh and his 'Ataiba levies to march on Majma'a, whose leaders appealed to Ibn Rashid for the help he had already promised them in principle. Muhammad promptly responded by bringing a large force down to Buraida, where he was joined by Hasan al Muhanna and his Qasim contingent. Thus reinforced, he advanced as far as Zilfi; and the news of his approach was enough to send 'Abdullah scuttling back to Riyadh after a fruitless siege of forty days. Muhammad then spent some days at Majma'a, ordering its affairs, and appointed one of his own men from Hail, Sulaiman ibn Sami, as governor on his behalf, before returning home. Without ostentation or serious exertion he had added another province to his realm; and this fact should have been a warning to 'Abdullah, which, as we shall see, he ignored for another throw with fate in due course.

Meanwhile it was the Sa'ud branch of the family that took up the challenge of Ibn Rashid's growing dominance in Najd. The 'Ataiba tribe provided the bulk of the force recruited by Muhammad, the eldest of Sa'ud's sons; and the army lay at the wells of 'Arwa in the 'Ardh district, where it was attacked by the combined forces of Ibn Rashid and Hasan al Muhanna. The home tribe was defeated, and Muhammad withdrew to al Kharj to prepare for another expedition during the same season (spring of 1883): this time against the Mutair in the eastern desert, from whom he captured a good booty of camels and other stock, though one of his brothers, 'Abdul-Rahman, was killed in the encounter.

The winter of 1883/4 was a season of bountiful rains and frequent floods in the valleys. And 'Abdullah took the field early in January, vaguely planning to bring the people of Majma'a to heel. From his advanced base at Shaqra he sent out his summonses to the clans for a general muster in the Hamada plain, at the rich pasture-tract of Umm al 'Asafir. The now familiar

alliance of Ha'il and Buraida sprang into action in defence of the new protégé; and almost inevitably the battle, which now took place, ended in the complete discomfiture and flight of 'Abdullah and his allies. Muhammad ibn Rashid remained in the Hamada to reorganise the administration of the districts on both sides. The principal citizens of the villages and towns of Washm and Sudair obeyed his summons to appear before him; and it is recorded that he appointed a governor for each of the villages of the two provinces. This was the first actual clash in arms between the suzerain and the vassal, but Muhammad's actions after the battle made it clear that he now considered the rôles reversed. The Najdi (Wahhabi) annalist notes at this point that Ibn Rashid had now begun to covet the realm of Najd, while he was being encouraged in the process by interested folk.

By the end of August 1884 'Abdullah was sufficiently roused to a sense of what was happening behind his back to send his brother, Muhammad, to Ha'il with a friendly letter for Ibn Rashid. The envoy was received with honour, and was back in Riyadh on October 21st with a princely gift from Muhammad, who freely and without reserve restored to 'Abdullah's jurisdiction the two provinces which he had virtually annexed earlier in the year. But Muhammad knew that the gift would come back to him with compound interest in due course. Dissension and strife were already at work in all the territory still ruled by 'Abdullah; and the end was not far off. Incidentally the record of the historian, Ibrahim ibn 'Isa, ceases abruptly at this point, with a note by a later copyist that his story of the following thirty-eight years had been officially suppressed. From now on therefore we have to follow another guide through the intricacies of Wahhabi history, though there seems reason to suspect that 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Nasir's record, entitled *al Sa'd w'al Majd*, constitutes the missing part of his predecessor's narrative, subjected to much superficial cancellation and marginal correction. The style is recognisably the same, while the cancelled portions, easily legible in the manuscript, somehow seem to ring truer to type than the often laboured efforts of the new editor to change the tone of the picture. At any rate we have the advantage of both versions to choose from.

Be that all as it may, the new author, having copied word for word his predecessor's record of events for several years preceding the point now reached, begins the sequel with the Muslim

year 1303, which opened on October 10th, 1885, and with the seizure and imprisonment of the unfortunate 'Abdullah at Riyadh by his nephews, the sons of Sa'ud, who assumed control of the government. This was Muhammad ibn Rashid's chance to show his friendship towards 'Abdullah, and at the same time to spread his mantle over what remained of the Wahhabi realm. He posted down to Riyadh with a large force, before which the sons of Sa'ud withdrew to al Kharj; released 'Abdullah from prison, and took him back with him to Hail for his greater safety; and appointed one of his most trusted lieutenants, the very efficient but entirely ruthless Salim al Subhan, as governor of Riyadh. Versions differ as to whether 'Abdul-Rahman was also carried away to Hail at this time, and it seems probable that it was not till nearly two years later that he did go there to visit his brother. Nor does there appear to be any record of the whereabouts of Muhammad ibn Faisal at this time; and we hear no more of him until the latter part of 1890, when we find him in Riyadh. He had probably been there all the time since 'Abdullah's departure for Hail.

During the autumn of 1886, following incidentally on a spring season of good rains, there was trouble in al Kharj between the always turbulent sons of Sa'ud and the local people, who appealed to Salim al Subhan for redress. A posse of soldiers, under one Shunaif, was sent down to deal with the matter, and three of the sons of Sa'ud were killed, namely Muhammad and Sa'd and 'Abdullah, in cold blood. Another son, 'Abdul-Rahman, had previously fallen in battle at Umm al 'Asafir, while the remaining son, 'Abdul-'Aziz, was at this time on a visit to Hail, where he was imprisoned by Ibn Rashid for the time being. His son, Sa'ud, a child of two at this time, was to plague his cousin, the late king, with pretensions to the throne during the early part of the twentieth century, though he later became one of his staunchest supporters, and is still alive.

The seasonal rains were again abundant; and Ibn Rashid was out raiding in the 'Ataiba country, when he met the tribe assembled in strength at 'Arwa, the scene of an earlier encounter in 1883. At first the Badawin, under Muhammad ibn Hindi, seemed to be getting the better of the fight; but the timely arrival of Hasan al Muhanna with a strong Qasim contingent enabled Ibn Rashid to rout the tribesmen, and appropriate their herds and camp equipment. The following autumn (1887)

was again bountiful of rain and floods; and Ibn Rashid directed his seasonal raiding against the 'Ajman, again accompanied by the Buraida chief. And the story of the next year was much the same sort of thing, with the 'Ataiba once more the victims of his excursions.

Meanwhile, in response to bitter complaints from Riyadh, he had dismissed the truculent Salim al Subhan from his post, and appointed the milder Fahhad ibn Rakhis as governor in 1887. And during the winter of 1889/90 his raiding was of a more ambitious character, extending to the Billi and Juhaina country of the Hijaz. On his return from this expedition he found his guest, 'Abdullah ibn Faisal, seriously ill, and readily acceded to his request to be allowed to return to Riyadh with his brother, 'Abdul-Rahman. Not only did he grant permission for his return, but he reinstated 'Abdullah in his full sovereign rights over his homeland. But the generosity of Muhammad was of little avail to the sick prince, who died soon after his arrival at Riyadh, on November 24th, 1889. It was twenty-four years since he had succeeded his distinguished father as the lawful monarch of a realm extending from Jabal Shammar to the 'Uman hinterland, and from the Persian Gulf to the Hijaz and Yaman borders. His incompetence had dissipated this vast heritage; and he had not hesitated to call in foreign aid to prop up his tottering throne, with the result that strangers had annexed the districts they had come to save. Little remained to him but his home district of al 'Aridh, and quite nominal sovereignty over Washm and Sudair, when he was carried off to Hail to eke out his last years in exile. He had spent no less than one third of his reign as a homeless fugitive, while others ruled in his stead at the centre of a disintegrating realm. By all accounts a man of charm and urbanity, he stands convicted by his record of an utter lack of wisdom. He must have been nearly seventy at the time of his death.

It fell to his younger brother, 'Abdul-Rahman, then nearly forty, to preside over the obsequies of his father's empire. On the death of his brother, he did not hesitate to take his place in spite of the presence of an elder brother, Muhammad, who had frequently played an active part in the military campaigns of his time, but had apparently no political ambitions. 'Abdul-Rahman immediately reported his brother's death and his own assumption of power to Ibn Rashid, requesting at the

same time the removal of the Rashidi representative at Riyadh, Fahhad ibn Rakhis. Muhammad, agreeing to a proposal which had not suggested that the man should be replaced by another, reappointed the ferocious Salim al Subhan to represent him at the Wahhabi capital and, it was suspected, to keep a close watch on its new ruler. The date of Salim's arrival is not recorded; but on the traditional 'Id holiday following the pilgrimage ceremony at 'Arafat (July 29th, 1889) Salim, in accordance with custom, asked leave to wait upon 'Abdul-Rahman and other members of the royal family present in Riyadh to convey the seasonal greetings of his master. This was a formality easily arranged; but 'Abdul-Rahman may well have had ground for suspecting treachery. It was, in any case, he that took the initiative in the matter; and Salim and his officers were attacked and some of them slain immediately on their entry into the audience chamber, though Salim himself appears to have made good his escape. The fat was now in the fire; the young David had deliberately challenged Goliath! And there would be the devil to pay. 'Abdul-Rahman saw to his powder and his fortifications; and fortune seemed to favour him with an unexpected development in the Qasim. For some reason, of which the details are not clear, though it was probably to be explained in terms of the perennial rivalry of Buraida and 'Anaiza, the people of Qasim had been offended by Ibn Rashid. Seeking allies to meet the trouble that would come to them, they wrote to 'Abdul-Rahman, promising him their allegiance and requesting his support.

But Ibn Rashid was too quick for the new alliance. Marching rapidly on his main objective, Riyadh, he sent messengers to 'Anaiza with assurances of his friendly sentiments towards its leaders and people. On arrival at Riyadh he found the town too strongly fortified and defended to be taken by assault; and settled down to besiege it, while harrying its supply routes and outlying settlements, and destroying its palm-groves, in which no fewer than 8,000 palms are said to have been cut down. After forty fruitless days of such activities, he suggested negotiations for a peaceful settlement of all differences. To this 'Abdul-Rahman agreed: sending out a deputation headed by his brother Muhammad, and including among others the chief priest, Shaikh 'Abdullah ibn 'Abdul-Latif, and 'Abdul-Rahman's ten-year-old son, 'Abdul-'Aziz, who thus made his

début on a stage which he was to dominate so completely when he came to man's estate. The matters at issue were easily and rapidly settled on the basis that Ibn Rashid should raise the siege of Riyadh, and go home in peace, while 'Abdul-Rahman should continue to occupy the throne of his ancestors. It is unlikely that either party seriously intended this arrangement to be final or permanent. The one had much lost ground to recover, while the other had but little more to win to make his dream of empire a reality. It was 'Abdul-Rahman who took the initiative in breaking the truce.

Disappointed at Riyadh, Ibn Rashid decided to square accounts with the people of Qasim, where Hasan al Muhanna, now apparently fallen from grace, had made common cause with Zamil al Sulaim, the chief of 'Anaiza, to throw off the yoke of Hail. Ibn Rashid, having collected a large force from the tribes of Shammar, Dhafir, Harb and even the Muntafiq of 'Iraq, marched down to the neighbourhood of Mulaida at the edge of the vast rolling sands of al Dhahi in mid-Qasim, while the confederates took up their position about the palm-groves of Qara'a. For some days there was light skirmishing on both sides, in which Ibn Rashid's troops suffered heavier losses than the enemy. He then moved westward towards the Dhulfa'a ridge to lure the Qasim troops into more open ground, where his superior cavalry had them at their mercy. In the bitter struggle which ensued Zamil al Sulaim himself was killed, as well as ten principal persons of the Buraida contingent. The total casualties of the confederates are given as 600 men; and Ibn Rashid's victory was decisive enough in all conscience. The Qasim was at his mercy, and he camped at the village of Rafi'a to receive the submission of its towns and villages. Hasan al Muhanna, wounded in the battle, surrendered, and was sent with other members of his family as prisoners to Hail, where he died some five years later. Salim al Subhan was appointed governor of Buraida in his place, while at 'Anaiza another member of the Sulaim family, 'Abdullah ibn Yahya, was appointed in the place of the dead Zamil under the general control of Salim. The battle of Mulaida had been fought on January 21st, 1891, leaving Muhammad ibn Rashid the undisputed arbiter of the fortunes of Najd, though he preferred to go home for a rest before dealing with the now simple problem of Riyadh. 'Abdul-Rahman had shown his hand by vigorous prepara-

tions to go to the aid of his Qasim allies. He was however too late for the vital battle, the news of which reached him on his arrival at Juraifa in the Hamada plain. Realising that the game was up, and returning precipitately to Riyadh, he made hasty preparations for departure from his capital with his family and all other members of the House of Sa'ud, except his brother, Muhammad, who remained behind to await the coming of Ibn Rashid. Meanwhile 'Abdul-Rahman wandered in the eastern desert, awaiting a reply from Shaikh 'Isa of Bahrain to his request that his women-folk and children should be allowed asylum there pending developments of the situation. The Shaikh's answer was of course favourable; and, having thus placed his dependants out of reach of trouble, he seems to have collected a following of Badawin and to have actually returned to Riyadh, though with no intention of remaining there. His next step was to seek refuge at Huraimila; but Ibn Rashid had no sooner received news of this than he came down with a large force to Barra. Thence he launched a surprise attack on the fugitives at Huraimila, whence 'Abdul-Rahman and his followers escaped very narrowly to wander again in the desert: awaiting replies to their appeals to the Turks in the Hasa and the Shaikh of Kuwait for permission to settle down in their territories. On the refusal of both, he proceeded towards the end of the year to Qatar, where he spent two months, during which further parleys with the Turks took place, until, through the good offices of Hafidh Pasha, the Mutasarrif of the Hasa, the Ottoman Government agreed to make him a monthly allowance of 60 gold *Liras* and gave him permission to settle down with his family anywhere he liked within territory under their influence. His choice fell on Kuwait, as the most suitable place from which to watch the trend of events in Najd out of reach of the malice of its new master.

Meanwhile Ibn Rashid had proceeded after the Huraimila incident to the occupation of Riyadh, whose circuit wall and other fortifications he demolished, though he left Muhammad ibn Faisal in charge as Amir on his behalf. But this was only a temporary arrangement, for in the following year, in consequence of complaints from the people of Riyadh that their defenceless condition was exposing them to Badawin raids on their crops and cattle, one 'Ajlan of Hail was appointed to the Amirate of Riyadh, and charged with the proper defence of the

inhabitants. The Najd of the Wahhabis had become an insignificant province of an alien dynasty. Its history becomes entirely parochial, with the record of deaths of notables and of the minor administrative appointments made from time to time by Ibn Rashid, who seems to have had little to occupy his attention but the customary winter raids against various Badawin tribes.

At the end of 1894 however an event occurred at Kuwait which must have given him food for thought. 'Abdul-Rahman's host, Muhammad ibn Sabah, and his brother, Jarrah, were assassinated by another brother, Mubarak, who assumed the chieftainship of the town and its tribes. He was destined to exercise great influence on the affairs of Arabia during the next twenty years; and he was never unmindful of the fact that the presence in his town of the exiled remnants of the Sa'ud family was an asset of inestimable value in his political activities. It was at his feet, as it were, that the young 'Abdul-'Aziz learned the statecraft, which was to stand him in good stead.

So the tale of simple desert events goes on as the years slip away, with Muhammad ibn Rashid firmly in the saddle and none to challenge his supremacy. The total eclipse of the sun on July 11th, 1896, may have seemed to some to forebode disaster, though nothing more serious happened than the death from tetanus in the same month of Ibrahim al 'Askar, the Amir of Majma'a. It was not till December, 1897, that the great man himself, Muhammad ibn Rashid, passed away, full of years and honour: to be succeeded by his nephew, 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Mit'ab ibn Rashid, a young man of about thirty at the time, who was destined to dissipate within a decade the great heritage committed to him by his uncle.

'Abdul-'Aziz II ibn Sa'ud

WITH the death of Muhammad ibn Rashid, the little principality of Kuwait became for a time the pivot of desert politics as well as a focus of international rivalry and tension. The Turks had lost an ally of inestimable value in Central Arabia, and were probably well aware of the fact that they could not count very heavily on his successor at Hail. 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Mit'ab ibn Rashid could not be reckoned in the same class as the Sa'dun chiefs of the 'Iraq Muntafiq or Shaikh Mubarak al Sabah, though, with suitable support in the shape of money and arms, he would have a certain nuisance value. It is unlikely that Sa'dun Pasha himself ever entertained any ambition to rule in Central Arabia: he was probably quite content with his dominant position in lower 'Iraq, and regarded the desert merely as an arena for the normal raids and joustings of the period. It was different with Mubarak, who certainly had dreams of stepping into the shoes of the dead Muhammad. With the principal members of the Sa'ud family as his guests in exile, he had strong cards to play, though he could not foresee the way the game would go, almost from the start. The overbearing behaviour of the new Ibn Rashid towards his subjects tended to encourage his optimism; and it was not long before the British Government, alarmed at the Turco-German *Drang nach* Kuwait in the interests of the Berlin-Baghdad railway, set his fears at rest so far as Kuwait itself was concerned by undertaking to protect it against any foreign aggression. Mubarak's hands were thus free for adventures in the desert, and he had its key in his pocket, as it were. He could also count on the co-operation of the Muntafiq in excursions into Ibn Rashid's territories, whence emanated the normal Badawin raids against the marches of 'Iraq.

Actually it was Ibn Rashid who took the initiative in the matter. In the autumn of 1898 he paid a visit to the neighbourhood of Riyadh to see that all was well in the Wahhabi homeland, of which his uncle had been the effective ruler for a dozen

years. The notables and religious leaders of the capital came out to do homage to their new sovereign; and, having satisfied himself that the local governor, 'Ajlan, had the situation well in hand, he indulged in a raid against the Dawasir tribe in the Maruta district before returning home, enriched by their booty. And in the following autumn, as the result of correspondence with certain disgruntled citizens of Kuwait, then living in voluntary exile at Basra, he turned his attention to the east. After an ordinary raid against the Badawin of the 'Iraq border, he marched in force in the direction of Kuwait. Here he encountered and defeated the local forces and their Muntafiq allies, pursuing the latter as far as Samawa on the Euphrates, where he remained some time before returning to Hail for the summer.

The first autumn of the new century saw further developments in the situation, with both sides ready for the fray. 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Sa'ud conducted a raid on the Qahtan as far inland as the Sudair province; and returned to report that conditions were favourable for more serious operations. Meanwhile Ibn Rashid had again approached the marches of 'Iraq: settling down for the winter in the Hajara desert to take advantage of any opening that might develop. While here he received news that Mubarak al Sabah, with a strong force including Sa'dun Pasha and his Muntafiq tribesmen and a contingent of the Dhafir tribe, as well as the Sa'udi princes, to whose call the 'Ajman and Mutair tribes had rallied in strength, had left Kuwait for the Shauki valley beyond the Dahna sands, whence it had reached Buraida, the capital of the Qasim. Ibn Rashid took up the challenge without hesitation: striking camp and marching west with all speed. Meanwhile the young 'Abdul-'Aziz, having received the reluctant permission of his father and Mubarak, had gone off from Shauki with a strong force to try his luck at Riyadh, which he actually entered over the ruins of its dismantled walls, though he could make no impression on the two forts in which the Rashidi garrison had taken refuge to withstand a siege. Actually the issue was to be settled for the time being on the battlefield of Sarif near Buraida, where in February 1901 the full force of the allies was thrown against Ibn Rashid. They were decisively defeated, and fled in confusion towards Kuwait, pursued by the enemy, who showed no mercy to the fugitives who fell into their hands. 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Sa'ud, on receiving the news of this disaster, withdrew hastily from Riyadh.

And Ibn Rashid was left to celebrate his victory by savage treatment of Buraida and other towns of the Qasim for their defection, while he sent the ferocious Salim ibn Subhan to teach the people of Riyadh a similar lesson.

Ibn Rashid could now revert to the original plan, which had taken him to Hajara in the autumn. It was clear that he had come to an understanding with the Turks to attack Kuwait, whose defences had obviously been shaken by the battle of Sarif. He now moved to Hafar al Batin in force, and was soon before the walls of Jahra, a village on the inner edge of the bay of Kuwait. Mubarak appealed to the British, who sent a warship to bombard the enemy camp. In such circumstances Ibn Rashid, after two or three weeks of futile siege, withdrew to his base camp at Hafar, and thence to Ha'il for the usual summer recess. His victory at Sarif had proved a pyrrhic affair and the initiative was now to pass to his foes.

Mubarak and 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Sa'ud, discouraged by their recent defeat, seemed to have no stomach for further adventures in the desert for the time being. But the young 'Abdul-'Aziz, now in his twenty-first year, was itching to be active: and may even have been encouraged by his personal experiences of the winter to harbour dreams of another attempt on Riyadh. Not without misgivings, Mubarak and his father gave their approval to his plans for an excursion into the desert during the autumn of 1901. With forty retainers of the family, he left Kuwait, gathering Badawin reinforcements as he went and raiding hostile tribes as far apart as the Hasa border (then under Turkish occupation) and the approaches to Sudair. By December he had reached the watering of Haradh (now an important oil-bearing area), to settle down there for the Ramdhan fast. No sooner was it ended than he girt up his loins for the great adventure, which culminated five days later, on January 15th, 1902, in his recovery of Riyadh. The details of that dramatic tale have been told too often to need repetition here. The Rashidi governor, 'Ajlan, was slain with many members of his garrison; and the astonished citizens of Riyadh hastened to pledge their loyalty to a Sa'ud once more, as in the days of yore. Within a month the walls, long since demolished by Muhammad ibn Rashid, had risen again to throw their protective arms round the Wahhabi capital.

Ibn Sa'ud's first care now was to arrange for the transport of

his father and the rest of the family from Kuwait to Riyadh, where a triumphal reception was prepared for them. Father and son then settled down to discuss the problems confronting the new régime; and it was easily arranged between them that, while 'Abdul-Rahman should retain the title of Imam as the head of the dynasty, his son should be the effective head of the State and commander of the army. In practice this somewhat anomalous position created no difficulty, as the son always deferred to the father in matters of ceremonial, while the father never interfered with affairs of State, on which his mature counsel was always unreservedly at the disposal of the son. Thus was born an association of great charm, based on the interplay of paternal pride and filial respect, which was destined to endure, unclouded by the slightest friction or disagreement, until the Imam 'Abdul-Rahman's death in 1928 at the ripe age of seventy-eight. And, as much of this long period was inevitably spent by the son in the field, it fell to the father to act as his deputy in all matters concerning the central administration at the capital.

Ibn Sa'ud was now free to busy himself with the herculean task of restoring the position of his dynasty in the provinces, in perfect confidence that all would be well in his absence. He proceeded in person to re-establish control in the southern provinces and in the tribal areas, which had never taken very kindly to the rule of Ibn Rashid. Al Kharj and Aflaj, Hauta and Hariq were visited in turn to receive the allegiance of their chiefs and citizens; and Wadi Dawasir sent a deputation to pledge its loyalty, while the Qahtan tribe was attacked and despoiled at Haliban to demonstrate the new ruler's determination to rule in fact as well as in name.

The northern provinces had to be left for a future occasion, as the local loyalists were not in a position to challenge the *de facto* jurisdiction of the Rashidi governors. Ibn Rashid himself was slow in reacting to the new situation in the south; and it was not till the autumn of 1902 that he was in a position to march south. Making his headquarters at Raghaba at the edge of the Tuwaiq range, he sent out scouting parties to tamper with the allegiance of the Hasa tribes of 'Ajman and Murra; but Ibn Sa'ud countered this move by sending his brother, Muhammad, and his cousin, 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi, to foil his intrigues. With the adhesion of the Murra tribe to the Sa'udi cause the

uncertain attitude of the 'Ajman could safely be discounted in the coming struggle. So, with Ibn Rashid encamped at Raghaba, Ibn Sa'ud was free to make his plans for drawing him into battle. His first move was to leave Riyadh to the protection of its own walls and native garrison, while he marched to Ha'ir in Wadi Hanifa, whence he proceeded to Hauta to mobilise its doughty citizens. At the same time he despatched Muhammad al Sudairi with a strong force to occupy Dilam, the capital of al Kharj, while his brother Sa'd went to Hariq to recruit reinforcements.

Ibn Rashid, evidently puzzled by these tactics, moved forward to the Hassi wells at the mouth of the Haisiya pass, where his sojourn was disturbed by an outbreak of fever among his troops. After some delay, which was perhaps from his point of view more serious than the casualties suffered from the disease, he proceeded to Banban, whence a rapid movement down Wadi Sulaiy brought him to Kharj. Intending an assault on Dilam, he reached and occupied the neighbouring palm-groves of Na'jan just too late for effective action. He was unaware of the fact that Ibn Sa'ud himself had arrived at Dilam the previous night with a strong force; and, when he launched his troops to the attack next morning, they came under a withering fire from the well-concealed defenders in the Dilam palm-groves and were forced to retreat in some disorder. The Sa'udi cavalry were launched against them in the open ground between the two oases; but Ibn Rashid rallied his men, and a fierce battle raged from noon to sunset. The initial set-back had however been too decisive a factor to counteract in the face of a much larger force than he had reckoned with; and Ibn Rashid withdrew during the night to Sulaimiya at the eastern extremity of the province, whence, on sighting the pursuing Sa'udi cavalry, he marched rapidly up Wadi Sulaiy to reach in due course the relative safety of the distant wells of Hafar al 'Atk.

In describing this decisive battle in later years, Ibn Sa'ud always admitted that things might have gone ill for his cause had Ibn Rashid been aware of one vital factor. It was true that he had plenty of men, but his stock of ammunition had been all but exhausted during the conflict. The cavalry pursuit had been little more than a gesture of defiance; but it had served its purpose. Ibn Rashid, nothing daunted by his defeat at Dilam, remained undisturbed at Hafar al 'Atk, to spend the

remaining months of the campaigning season of 1902/3 raiding in various directions. Successes against the 'Ataiba near Artawiya and against the Subai' and Suhul in the Dahna sands tempted him into Kuwait territory, where a raid against the 'Araibdar tribesmen not far from the town itself seriously alarmed Shaikh Mubarak. An urgent message was sent to Ibn Sa'ud for help; and it was not long before he, no doubt influenced by the urgent need of replenishing his ammunition, appeared before the town with a large force (10,000 men it is said). Here he was joined by the Shaikh's son Jabir with a further 4,000 men for an impressive demonstration of force in the eastern desert, during which the Mutair allies of Ibn Rashid under 'Ammash al Duwish were attacked and despoiled in the Summan district.

Meanwhile Ibn Rashid, having rapidly returned to his camp at Hafar al 'Atk and learning of Ibn Sa'ud's visit to Kuwait, decided to make a bid for Riyadh itself. Arriving unnoticed under cover of night at the hillock of Abu Makhruq within sight of the town, he settled down to await the dawn. But, unfortunately for him, the presence of his army was noticed by a Badawi proceeding to the capital; and, the alarm being given, the citizens proceeded to man the fortifications in strength. A surprise attack being now out of the question, Ibn Rashid could do little more than vent his rage on the surrounding palm-groves, in which a few unoffending peasants were killed and considerable damage done. There was also some desultory fighting before the walls between sortie parties of the citizens and groups of the attacking force. But the initiative had been lost; and on the second day Ibn Rashid decided to abandon the attempt and to withdraw northwards. He never came south again.

His main concern now was to place the provinces farther north (Washm, Sudair and Majma'a) in a fit state of defence to resist any attempt by Ibn Sa'ud to recover them. A fort was built at Tharmida in Washm and a strong garrison left there to defend it, while garrisons were similarly placed at Majma'a and Raudhat al Sudair. Shaqra, the capital of Washm, being already sufficiently secured in his interests, he could afford to retire into the Qasim province and await developments. Ibn Sa'ud, on his return to Riyadh from Kuwait, found himself in undisputed control not only of his home province of al 'Aridh (including Riyadh) but also of all the southern provinces of

Najd. And the first news that came from the front after his arrival was to the effect that Musa'id ibn Suwailim, who had been despatched by the Imam 'Abdul-Rahman to occupy the northern districts in the wake of the retiring enemy, had not only fulfilled his mission faithfully but had exceeded his instructions by launching an attack on Shaqra. The Rashidi commander, Suwaigh, had however made no attempt to defend the place, and had fled to the new fort at Tharmida, whither he had been followed by Musa'id after his unopposed occupation of the Washm capital. Reinforcements were despatched immediately under 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi to the Washm province; but it would seem that the now isolated garrison of Tharmida had evacuated the fort under cover of night before their arrival. Meanwhile other forces from Riyadh had reached the Sudair province, where resistance was met with only at Raudha. This was soon overcome however, and the garrison fled to Majma'a.

At this stage Ibn Sa'ud appears to have come up north to direct operations in person, while Ibn Rashid, arriving *via* Zilfi at 'Ashaira on the eastern confines of Sudair to try to restore the situation, could do little more than destroy some undefended villages before retiring from the scene for good. At this the people of Majma'a lost no time in seeking the clemency of Ibn Sa'ud for their past lapses from grace; and the town of Zilfi also surrendered. Thus the whole defence system for these provinces, hastily organised by Ibn Rashid before his retreat to the Qasim, had collapsed incontinently on the appearance of the Sa'udi forces. The coming fight for the vital province of Qasim confronted both commanders with serious problems. Ibn Rashid had obviously begun to realise that his position was precarious in the extreme owing to the desertion of his cause by the villages and tribes which had hitherto been at his disposal. He still had the resources of the Qasim available for the feeding of his army so long as he could remain there; but he could not trust the notoriously factious Qusman to stand by him if things went ill. Indeed it seemed that his only solid hope of withstanding the advance of Ibn Sa'ud lay in the dangerous alternative of an appeal to the Turks, who would be nothing loth to establish a footing in Central Arabia in support of their Hasa province: itself the result of their intervention in favour of 'Abdullah ibn Saud some thirty years before. Ibn Rashid decided to clutch at this last straw: sent messages to the Turkish

Wali at Baghdad: and proceeded to make temporary arrangements for the defence of the Qasim in anticipation of the coming of the 'soldiers of the Sultan'. Strong garrisons were placed at 'Anaiza and Buraida: the latter under the local governor, and the former under his own cousin, Majid ibn Hamud, in view of the doubtful loyalty of its citizens. An outpost, reinforced by Badawin of the Harb tribe, was also thrown out to the province of al Sirr under one Husain ibn Jarrad to watch and, if necessary, counter any movement made by the Sa'udi troops.

As for Ibn Sa'ud, the relatively easy occupation of all the provinces up to the Qasim frontier had placed him in a somewhat difficult predicament. The winter drought and the rapacity of the Rashidi commanders had denuded the whole area under occupation of all supplies: while he could not count absolutely on local support in the event of his risking an immediate advance into the Qasim. Indeed the principal individuals known to be in favour of his cause had deemed it wise to remove themselves from the Qasim for fear of reprisals by Ibn Rashid, and were at this time at Kuwait awaiting developments in Najd. Ibn Sa'ud accordingly decided to return to Riyadh for the time being after sending a message to Shaikh Mubarak, requesting him to send his Qasim friends to join him there. The latter were only too anxious for an opportunity of helping in the liberation of their homeland from the Rashidi yoke: and a party of about 200 of them arrived shortly afterwards at Riyadh, including 'Abdul-'Aziz al Sulaim and Salih al Muhanna, chiefs respectively of 'Anaiza and Buraida.

Ibn Sa'ud now lost no time in resuming operations. Early in March, 1904, he was in contact with Husain ibn Jarrad in the district of al Sirr, and inflicted a resounding defeat on him and his Harb supporters at Faidhat al Sirr. By the end of the month, evading the outposts of Majid ibn Hamud, he had effected an entry into 'Anaiza by night. The Rashidi deputy governor, Fuhaid ibn Subhan, was killed; and Ibn Sa'ud himself slew Majid's brother, 'Ubaid. But, not content with his surprisingly easy capture of one of the two principal towns of the Qasim, he went forth the same night in search of the enemy's main body under Majid himself amid the palm-groves of Wadi Rima. His attack caught the enemy unawares, and the confused fighting in the dark ended with the flight of Majid and the capture of his camp and all his stores and equipment. An

interesting feature of this episode was that, either in the Wadi Rima camp or at 'Anaiza itself, Ibn Sa'ud found his three cousins, the grandsons of his uncle, Sa'ud, who had thrown in their lot with Ibn Rashid in the hope of regaining the throne of Riyadh for themselves with his help. With a magnanimity, which was to become traditional with him, he forgave them unconditionally, and even offered them the choice of remaining with him or rejoining Ibn Rashid. They were to plague him often enough thereafter with their pretensions, but for the moment they accepted his offer of peace and hospitality. It was from this incident that this branch of the family acquired the sobriquet of *al 'Araif*, a term used by the Badawin for camels lost in a raid and subsequently recovered in a counter-raid.

The road to Buraida was now clear, and Ibn Sa'ud had no difficulty in occupying the town, though the Rashidi garrison refused to surrender and shut itself up in the great castle to withstand a siege in the hope of being relieved by Ibn Rashid in due course. That hope was not however realised, and after about a month of desultory sniping and fighting the garrison surrendered on terms, and were allowed to march out with their arms to rejoin their chief at Hail. Ibn Sa'ud was now master of the western part of the Qasim, while the eastern part of the province, with its capital Rass, remained at least nominally loyal to Ibn Rashid and was soon to become his base of operations. Meanwhile his appeal to the Turks for help was beginning to bear fruit in the shape of eight battalions of regular troops, partly from Madina under Sidqi Pasha and partly from Baghdad under Faizi Pasha, who was in supreme command of the whole expeditionary force.

The surrender of Buraida had taken place in early June 1904: and it was not many weeks after this that Ibn Rashid began to bestir himself. Fully supplied by the Turks with money, arms and supplies, he was able to recruit a considerable force of Badawin from Harb and 'Ataiba, as well as his own Shammar tribe. With these and the usual citizen levies and the Turkish battalions he moved down to the Qasim, which he reached about the end of August in the neighbourhood of al Qara'a. Ibn Sa'ud accepted the challenge, and led his army to al Busar, one of the small oases of the district known as al Khubub. Well protected against the enemy's cavalry by the surrounding sand-dunes, he could observe Ibn Rashid's manoeuvres without

committing himself to any positive action. Desultory skirmishing was the order of the day until Ibn Rashid moved westward to the undulating sand-tract of al Shihiyat, where his men could find shelter by day in its small scattered palm-groves, while his cavalry could operate easily in case of need. Ibn Sa'ud responded with an advance to the extensive palm-groves of al Bukairiya, where his army lay in comparative security behind the long and fairly high sand-ridges separating it from the enemy. The expected attack at dawn on the morrow did not materialise; and the Sa'udi troops repaired to the shelter of the palm-groves to eke out the heat of the day. At high noon however the enemy was suddenly upon them. The battle raged until nearly sunset. The Sa'udi force, taken unawares by the enemy attack in full array, had the advantage of the cover of the palm-groves and was able to inflict heavy casualties on the attackers; but it could not afford to remain in the oasis after nightfall, when it would run the risk of being over-run by the superior numbers of the enemy. Gradually therefore, and fighting a rear-guard action, it worked its way back through the palms to the sand-ridges behind them. Once there they beat in retreat as fast as possible in the growing darkness.

The Rashidi force remained in possession of the battle-field. But at sunset it was their turn to be surprised. The Qasim contingent, which had arrived too late to take part in the fight and was unaware of the retreat of its allies, fell upon the enemy while he was gathering up the spoils of the day's battle. The tables had been completely turned, and the Rashidi troops suffered further grievous casualties as they in turn withdrew from the oasis. It would seem from the somewhat confused accounts of this episode which have come down to us that some sort of contact was maintained during the next day or two. But the main conflict was over; and the Qusman, having now learned of the retreat of the Sa'udi main body and fearing the arrival of Rashidi reinforcements, broke off the fight and withdrew to their base. Ibn Rashid also drew back his forces to his camp at al Shihiyat after leaving a contingent at Bukairiya, which was subsequently reinforced. The Sa'udi army had meanwhile gone right back to 'Anaiza to regroup, and was in due course joined there by the Qasim contingent. Some days later Ibn Sa'ud ordered an advance on Bukairiya, where the Rashidi camp was over-run by a surprise attack in the dark, and its occupants re-

treated to the shelter of the village, round which there was bitter fighting for the rest of the night until the Rashidi troops broke off the engagement and fled in the direction of al Khabra, which they failed to take after several days of siege, during which they brought up some guns to bombard the village.

Ibn Rashid now made for al Rass, but found himself forestalled there by Ibn Sa'ud's cavalry under his brother Muhammad. Thus thwarted of his objective, he diverted his march to the neighbouring village of Shinana, which was to be his headquarters for the best part of a month, during which there was little activity beyond desultory cavalry skirmishing on both sides. Ibn Rashid's Badawin auxiliaries now began to be restive owing to the difficulty of pasturing their camels in the face of frequent enemy raids; and he was virtually forced into premature action. Moving back, as if in retreat, to the neighbourhood of a small oasis called Qasr ibn 'Uqaiyil, some distance west of Shinana, he was pursued and strongly attacked by Ibn Sa'ud. After some days of vigorous fighting he decided, under pressure from his own Badawin, on retreat. His impedimenta was loaded on the camels, which set off on their long journey to Ha'il under cover of night. In the morning Ibn Sa'ud launched his cavalry in pursuit of the straggling caravan, while his main body maintained heavy pressure on the Shammar infantry and the Turkish troops in the wide sandy bed of the Wadi. Meanwhile the caravan with the bulk of Ibn Rashid's stores, treasure and equipment was being roughly handled by the pursuing cavalry. On learning this Ibn Rashid decided on retreat; but the constant pressure of the Sa'udi pursuit soon converted the retreat into a rout, and the rout developed into a *saue qui peut*. The historian, Ibn Nasir, records laconically: 'Some of them followed the Badawin and escaped: others made for the desert and perished; and the rest surrendered to the Imam, who gave them shelter and treated them honourably.'

The battle of Bukairiya had occupied the greater part of the two months of September and October, and after various turns of fortune had resulted in a complete victory for Ibn Sa'ud. It is difficult to believe that the full force of eight Turkish regular battalions was deployed in the battle; but it should be remembered that the Turks were fighting under unfamiliar and exceedingly unfavourable conditions in a drought-stricken desert area in the heat of summer. In any case their performance

does not seem to have been very distinguished, and they had suffered defeat at the hands of a brave and skilful foe, fighting with technical resources much inferior to their own. Be that as it may, Ibn Rashid himself retired to Kahfa, a village just within the borders of Jabal Shammar, whence he sent news of the disaster to Baghdad with an appeal for more help. It so happened however that at this juncture news had arrived of a serious revolt against Turkish rule in the Yaman under the leadership of the Imam Yahya Hamid-al-Din. And the Ottoman Government was constrained to limit its liabilities in Central Arabia in favour of action to restore the situation in the south. Ahmad Faizi Pasha was accordingly ordered to proceed post-haste to the Yaman to take command of the forces there and of the reinforcements now being sent: the command in Arabia being taken over by Sidqi Pasha, who appears to have been instructed to negotiate a settlement with Ibn Sa'ud and to extricate the Turkish expeditionary force from its unpleasant predicament in the desert.

Meanwhile the Turkish authorities in Mesopotamia had sent a message through the Shaikh of Kuwait to the Imam 'Abdul-Rahman at Riyadh, proposing immediate negotiations on a political level. This was agreed to, and the Imam proceeded to Kuwait to discuss matters with the Wali of Basra in the presence of Shaikh Mubarak. The Turks proposed that the Qasim should be constituted a buffer State, with a Turkish military force to protect and control it pending a lasting settlement of all matters at issue between Ibn Sa'ud and Ibn Rashid. To this the Imam appears to have agreed readily enough subject to the proviso that the matter be referred to the people of Najd for confirmation: 'knowing', as the historian somewhat naively comments, 'that they would never agree to any such arrangement'. Back at Riyadh he received news that his son was returning from the Qasim, and went forth to meet him at al Hassi. Father and son, having discussed the Kuwait negotiations, decided to return at once to the Qasim. Actually however 'Abdul-Rahman did not go farther than Shaqra, where he remained to reorganise the administration and recruit levies in case of need, while his son proceeded to 'Anaiza to meet Sidqi Pasha and Faizi Pasha, who had not yet departed. The original Turkish proposal of a buffer zone with Turkish troops to be stationed at Buraida and 'Anaiza was repeated and rejected in

spite of its acceptance by Salih ibn Muhanna, who saw himself in the rôle of a mediatised chief of the Qasim under Ottoman protection and independent of both Hail and Riyadh. And all that seems to have come of the renewed negotiations was an agreement that the Turkish troops should depart to Baghdad and Madina respectively under Ibn Sa'ud's safe conduct and guarantee of immunity from molestation by the tribes on the way. As a precaution against possible Turkish treachery however it was stipulated by Ibn Sa'ud that the Baghdad contingent should cross the Mesopotamian frontier before the Madina party be permitted to leave the Qasim for its destination. This agreement was duly implemented, and appears to have been executed without any hitch.

Thus the Turkish troops left Central Arabia for good; and Ibn Sa'ud was clearly in a position to impose his will on the Qasim. But he had aimed at a settlement by consent in his favour; and he was so disgusted with the intrigues of the rival factions in the province that, satisfied of the extreme unlikelihood of an attempt by the Turks to return, and warning the Buraida chief, his own nominee Salih ibn Muhanna, that Ibn Rashid would soon be back to square accounts with him, he abruptly left the Qasim to its own devices and returned to Riyadh. His real reason for this was perhaps the arrival of serious news from al Qatar, where Ahmad had risen against his brother Qasim ibn Thani, the ruling Shaikh, with the assistance of the Murra tribe, and was having the better of the conflict. Ibn Sa'ud therefore proceeded in all haste for the scene of trouble, and had little difficulty in disposing of the revolt: Ahmad himself fleeing to Bahrain.

No sooner had Ibn Sa'ud turned his back on the Qasim than Ibn Rashid, as he had foreseen, renewed his activities against the province. A strong raiding party was sent against al Rass, which was easily taken, while its citizens fled towards Shiqqa, whither they were pursued, though the villagers had no difficulty in beating off the attackers. Another raid near Tarafiya resulted in the slaughter of forty defenceless grass-cutters, while the small tribe of Hammadin was also attacked and robbed of its sheep and camels. These incidents, little more than pin-pricks in themselves, created a sense of insecurity in the province, whose people blamed Salih al Muhanna for his uncooperative attitude towards Ibn Sa'ud. To divert attention

from his intrigues with Ibn Rashid, he sent his brother Muhanna to 'Anaiza and a messenger to Shaikh Mubarak, who had also been covertly in correspondence with Hail, suggesting an approach to Ibn Sa'ud with a view to a general settlement. The latter could not ignore the olive branch, but his response was cautious. His brother Muhammad was sent to raid the Harb in the west, while he himself marched at leisure to Buraida, and thence to the Asyah sand-plain on the borders of Ibn Rashid's territory in company with Salih al Muhanna himself and the Buraida contingent. But, unconvinced of Salih's new show of loyalty, he deemed it wiser to withdraw to Zilfi, and thence to Majma'a, leaving the Buraida force to return home on the way. Meanwhile Ibn Rashid was still raiding sporadically in the eastern desert from his camp at Raudhat al Muhanna; and Ibn Sa'ud decided to strike.

Coming down into the plain with a strong force, now joined by the Mutair under its chief, Faisal al Duwish, whose attitude had hitherto been somewhat equivocal, he traversed the sandy tract separating him from the enemy by night on foot. The attack was delivered in the pre-dawn darkness of April 13th, 1906; and the battle was fiercely contested: Ibn Rashid himself being conspicuous as he rode round, rallying his men and directing their attacks with his standard-bearer at his side. While thus engaged however he was recognised and shot dead; and that was the end of the battle. The Rashidi troops broke and fled, while their leaders raced for Hail with no thought but to contest the succession to the vacant throne. Much booty fell into the hands of Ibn Sa'ud in the enemy's camp: but he wasted no time in counting it. Instead he marched on and attacked two sections of the Harb tribe at Raha and Abu Mughair respectively: and then he appeared before Buraida, where Salih al Muhanna was arrested and sent in custody to Riyadh, while his cousin, Muhammad al 'Abdullah abal-Khail, was appointed Amir in his stead.

The death of 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Rashid relieved Ibn Sa'ud of all further anxiety regarding the stability of his régime up to the northern boundary of the Qasim, beyond which he seems to have had no ambition to trespass. The removal of Salih al Muhanna had strengthened his hand in the Qasim itself. And when Mit'ab ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz, who had established himself on his father's vacant throne, opened overtures for a settlement,

Ibn Sa'ud readily agreed to the independence of Jabal Shammar within its natural frontiers, while Mit'ab undertook to return to Riyadh all remaining dissident members of the Sa'udi family who had taken refuge at Hail in the hope of being able to exploit the situation in their own interests. It would seem however that the evacuation of the Turkish troops, now under the command of Sami Pasha al Faruqi, who had superseded Sidqi Pasha, had at this time still not been completed. And so long as any part of them remained, their presence created openings for intrigue. Mit'ab himself, in spite of his settlement with Ibn Sa'ud, was not altogether innocent of treasonable correspondence with Baghdad, though his overtures do not seem to have impressed the Turks. Sami Pasha did however try to bribe Ibn Sa'ud to allow his troops to remain in the Qasim, but his offer was indignantly rejected: and the troops finally departed. Ibn Sa'ud then proceeded on his way home, breaking his journey at Shaqra, where a deputation from Majma'a visited him to confirm their oath of allegiance. On the other hand, while here, he received news of treasonable correspondence between Faisal al Duwish of the Mutair and the Turks. This was dealt with promptly by the despatch of a punitive expedition, after which he returned to Riyadh in time to greet a deputation bringing the personal thanks of Sultan 'Abdul-Hamid for the consideration shown to his commanders and troops during their sojourn in Arabia!

Ibn Sa'ud however was not to rest long on his laurels. Disturbing news came from Hail of the murder of Mit'ab and two of his three brothers, the youngest of whom, Sa'ud, was smuggled to safety by a faithful slave. Sultan ibn Hamud, the perpetrator of this shocking crime, became the ruler of Hail for only a year until January 1908, when he in turn was murdered by his own brothers, Sa'ud and Faisal. The former became the new ruler, while the latter went as governor to Jauf and the northern districts, whose attachment to Hail was being challenged by the Ruwala chief, Nuri al Sha'lan: doubtless with encouragement from the Turks, who were also probing northwards in the Hijaz. Here indeed the oasis of Khaibar had already thrown off its allegiance to Sultan ibn Hamud, whose incompetence also resulted in the diversion of the 'Iraq and Persian pilgrim caravans from the Hail route to that going *via* the Qasim. Sultan was not however inclined to accept the loss of the Qasim as

final; and he could still count on the Mutair tribe and the Buraida hierarchy to keep the situation fluid.

It was Faisal al Duwish of the former who first raised the standard of revolt in May 1907, when he was crushingly defeated and himself seriously wounded at Majma'a. The usual farce of surrender and pardon produced no permanent change in his attitude; and in the same autumn we find him camped at Tarafiya in support of Sultan and Muhammad abal-Khail of Buraida in another bid for the Qasim. Ibn Sa'ud immediately came up to the Sirr district, whither he had summoned the tribes of 'Ataiba and Qahtan, Subai' and Suhul to join him in full strength. Thence he proceeded to 'Anaiza, raiding Sultan's outposts here and there, and sending a force to contain the Mutair at Tarafiya, whither he marched in person to inflict another resounding defeat on Faisal, whose camp he occupied. Sultan and the Buraida folk now sought to surprise him in this position on September 20th; but the ensuing battle ended in their complete defeat and flight to Buraida, whence Sultan returned to Hail, leaving his brother, Faisal, to help Muhammad abal-Khail in the event of trouble. Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud, having despatched a cavalry contingent to watch Buraida, launched out on a series of excursions as far afield as Bukairiya and al Rass and the Harb country around Nabhaniya: after which he returned for a space to Riyadh.

He was soon back in the Qasim on receipt of news, which proved to be untrue, that Sultan was moving down to Buraida. To anticipate this movement he advanced as far as Kahfa, whence, on finding no sign of the enemy, he launched a raid on a camp of the Tawala Shammar at Faïd: after which he withdrew to Bukairiya, where he received the news of Sultan's murder in January 1908. Sa'ud, the new ruler, lost no time in seeking an accommodation with Ibn Sa'ud, who was now free to turn his attention to Buraida with a view to a final settlement. The people of Buraida were for the most part sick of the constant state of alarm in which they lived as the result of Muhammad abal-Khail's self-seeking policy. They accordingly arranged in secret correspondence with Ibn Sa'ud to open one of the town gates on a certain night during the evening prayer. The towers and turrets of the circuit wall were easily occupied by the men detailed for the purpose; and the wide space in front of the great fort was screened off from the rest of the town by a force of 300

men, while Ibn Sa'ud's proclamation of immunity to all loyal citizens and his demand for the surrender of all arms were read in all mosques and public places.

The effect was immediate; and all that remained for him to overcome was Muhammad himself and his men, who had shut themselves up in the castle to stand a siege. Their position was however hopeless; and after some days of futile skirmishing Muhammad sought terms of surrender. Matters were easily arranged on the basis of the surrender of all arms and the personal immunity of Muhammad and his family and personal retainers, who were left free to depart from Buraida whithersoever they desired. They chose to seek asylum in 'Iraq, and in due course settled down at Suq al Shuyukh. Muhammad abal-Khail was the last native governor of Buraida. Ibn Sa'ud could no longer risk the consequences of leaving its principal families to disturb the peace of his realm by their contentious rivalry for the provincial leadership. A stronger hand was required to keep the independent spirit of the Qasim under control: and the new Governor-General was none other than Ibn Sa'ud's own doughty cousin, 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi, who was to remain in charge for the next five years until his services were required to cope with even graver responsibilities in another sphere. The Qasim ceased to be the pivot of Arabian politics and the source of anxiety it had been throughout the critical years of Ibn Sa'ud's struggle for dominance in Najd.

Buraida had surrendered on May 29th, 1908. Sa'ud, the new ruler of Hail, hastened to seek an accommodation with Ibn Sa'ud, who readily agreed to recognise the independence of Jabal Shammar on condition of its ceasing to trouble his peace. The people of Majma'a also sent a deputation under their chief, 'Abdullah al 'Askar, to apologise for their hitherto equivocal attitude, and to proclaim their allegiance to the new order. And a great flood in Mecca seemed to set the seal of divine blessing on a year of remarkable achievement. The swirling waters entered the Great Mosque, and formed a lake round the Ka'ba itself to a depth of ten feet.

Ibn Sa'ud's hopes of a period of peace were, however, soon shattered by a recrudescence of trouble at Hail. The rightful heir to the throne, the ten-year-old Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Rashid, had, as has already been noted, been saved from the holocaust of Sultan ibn Hamud's usurpation, and had been

smuggled away to the safety of Madina. The continuing troubles at Hail had however turned the thoughts of responsible citizens to the desirability of a restoration of the legitimate line in the interests of stability and peace. The leaders of this movement were two members of a remarkable family, destined to play a leading part in the politics of Jabal Shammar during the dozen years or so that remained of its existence as an independent unit. It was Hamud ibn Subhan who conceived and executed the *coup d'état* of February 1909, in collaboration with his cousin, Zamil ibn Subhan. Having concerted support in Hail in advance, they collected a sufficient force to justify hopes of success. The young Sa'ud was brought from Madina; the gates were opened to him by loyalists in the town; and in the fighting which ensued Sa'ud ibn Hamud was killed, while other members of his family were disposed of by murder, though two of them, Dhari and Faisal, managed to escape to the hospitality of Riyadh. Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz was proclaimed Amir under the regency of Hamud ibn Subhan, who was incidentally the husband of his sister, the only daughter of 'Abdul-'Aziz. Zamil was his right-hand man in the governance of the State, and actually succeeded him as Regent a few months later on his death from poison. To strengthen his hold on affairs he married Sa'ud's mother as her fourth husband: she had previously been in turn the wife of the great Muhammad ibn Rashid, 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Rashid and Sultan ibn Hamud, the murderer and successor of her stepson Mit'ab. The seclusion of women in Arabia has never prevented them playing the part of important pawns on the political chess-board.

Hamud's first step was to try to secure the good will of Ibn Sa'ud, but for some reason unexplained by the available histories, the latter rejected his advances; and it was not long before Zamil, now in charge, organised a raid on the Mutair, to which Ibn Sa'ud riposted with an attack on the Shammar in the neighbourhood of Shu'aiba, where he made his headquarters while searching the Nufud for Zamil, who was known to be manœuvring for an encounter. He then moved to a place called al Ash'ali, set up his tents as usual with all the incidental impedimenta, and withdrew for some distance to watch developments. Zamil now, moving under cover of darkness, found the camp and made dispositions for an attack when his patrols reported that it was empty. This was too much for discipline; and the

whole force made for the camp, looting and destroying the paraphernalia of the enemy, who quietly observed the proceedings until the time came for a surprise attack. The inevitable defeat and rout ensued: and Ibn Sa'ud passed by way of al Qubba to the Qasim *en route* for Riyadh.

The whole of Central Arabia was now in the throes of a great drought, which lasted for several years and became famous in the country's annals by the name of *al Sahut* (extreme sterility?). In spite of it, or perhaps because of it, an era of general dissension and instability set in, during which Ibn Sa'ud's slender resources were taxed to the utmost. It was during his absence in the north that his father, 'Abdul-Rahman, had received disturbing news of local friction in the Hariq district, where the Hazzani Amir had been murdered by two of his younger cousins. A force sent down to stop the trouble arrested the murderers, and handed them over to their victim's brothers, who slew them. The force had however no sooner departed than two further murders occurred; and 'Abdul-'Aziz in person now proceeded to the town to deal with the situation. His demand that the whole matter should be referred to trial in accordance with the Shar' law was rejected: and the refractory leaders took refuge in their fort, to stand a siege of fifty days, at the end of which Ibn Sa'ud drove a mine under the fort and threatened to blow it up with all its occupants, including their women and children. The leaders now surrendered, and were sent to Riyadh, where they were imprisoned in the Mismak dungeon for two years, after which they were released on the personal intervention of Qasim al Thani of al Qatar.

Meanwhile difficulties had arisen between Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait and Sa'dun Pasha of the 'Iraq Muntafiq; and Ibn Sa'ud, responding to an urgent appeal from the former, marched towards the Hajara district near the 'Iraq frontier with a force of some 7,000 men, the greater part of which was contributed by Kuwait and under the command of Jabir. They were soon in contact with Sa'dun Pasha, who had a force of about the same strength with a considerable superiority in cavalry. Jabir, ignoring Ibn Sa'ud's advice to launch his Badawin levies on the enemy's camp, opened the battle of Hadiya, fought on June 16th, 1910, with a cavalry charge. Sa'dun had held his own cavalry in reserve, and only brought it into action when the enemy's charge had been held and

thrown back in confusion. The allied force melted away into the desert, fleeing towards Kuwait, while the Muntafiq occupied and plundered its camp.

This battle was but part of a comprehensive movement intended to restrict the efforts of Zamil ibn Subhan to restore something of the former glory of Ha'il. While Sa'dun Pasha was in alliance with Zamil, Nuri al Sha'lan of the Ruwala, who had by now wrested Jauf and the Wadi Sirhan district from their former allegiance to Ha'il, had joined with the 'Amarat 'Anaza to bring pressure on Zamil in the north and north-east, while Ibn Sa'ud and Kuwait did the same from the south. We have seen how one item of this programme had gone awry at Hadiya, while at about the same time Zamil attacked the northern allies at Jumaima to their complete discomfiture. Meanwhile a revolt of the Taima oasis in the west and its occupation, at the invitation of its inhabitants, by a Turkish force from Madina, had forced Zamil to take action. Success again attended his arms: the Turkish garrison was forced to retreat; and the inhabitants were subjected to severe reprisals for their lapse from loyalty. At the same time, greatly helped by the prevailing drought, Sa'dun and Zamil were able to intrigue effectively with the 'Ajman in the eastern desert to maintain pressure on Ibn Sa'ud's flank; and the position here had been further complicated by the fact that the grandsons of Sa'ud ibn Faisal, who had returned to the fold, as already noted, after the capture of 'Anaiza by Ibn Sa'ud in 1904, had left Riyadh during Ibn Sa'ud's absence on the Hadiya expedition, and had joined the now hostile 'Ajman. This was an unfortunate development, which was to have serious results almost immediately. The dissident cousins, never forgetful of their seniority in the legitimate line of succession, could not be employed in important provincial posts without risk: they had been treated with all honour and consideration by Ibn Sa'ud; but it was not surprising that a group of men in the prime of life should have chafed at their enforced idleness at a time when their world was so full of openings for excitement and adventure.

As if all these factors were not enough tribulation for Ibn Sa'ud, his cup of bitterness was not yet full. It is true that at the beginning of 1911 Zamil made overtures for peace, which were accepted on the limited basis of the recognition of his independence in Jabal Shammar only. But such an arrangement



His Royal Highness Amir Faisal ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz
Crown Prince of Sa'udi Arabia

would only last as long as it suited the convenience of the parties; and now another enemy was to appear out of the west. The Turks had never given up hope of establishing their influence in Central Arabia, though their experiences with Ibn Rashid had been disappointing. They now turned to Sharif Husain, who had been appointed Amir of Mecca in 1908, the year in which the Hijaz Railway had been completed as far as Madina. As a child he had been brought up among the Badawin before embarking on his long exile in Constantinople. And now at the age of sixty he had his first opportunity of showing what he could do to establish himself as a serious factor in desert politics.

In general, and without any positive action, he followed the policy of his predecessors in obstructing the continuation of the railway to Mecca. On the other hand he showed signs of tact and leadership in an expedition which he was commissioned by the Sublime Porte to lead against the rebel Idrisi chief, Muhammad, who had occupied the 'Asir highlands and Abha at a time when the Turks were engaged in suppressing a serious revolt of the Imam Yahya in the Yaman. Husain recovered the 'Asir province for his masters, and made a triumphant return journey to Mecca *via* the oases of Bisha, Ranya and Turaba to show the flag. His success encouraged the Turks to use his services again in an attempt to establish their influence in the desert. And at the end of 1911, or the beginning of the following year, he marched with a strong force through the 'Ataiba country: reaching Quai'ya just at the moment when Ibn Sa'ud's favourite brother, Sa'd, had arrived there to enlist recruits for a campaign against the 'Araif pretenders, who had come out in open rebellion and established themselves in the districts of Hauta and Hariq. Sa'd was seized and carried off by Husain as a hostage; and Ibn Sa'ud was invited to ransom him at the price of accepting Ottoman suzerainty and paying a nominal tribute in respect of the Qasim.

The pretenders were left to their own devices for a time, while Ibn Sa'ud pursued Husain as he retreated westward with his precious booty: always keeping well out of reach of any mischief that might be brewing. In effect Ibn Sa'ud had little choice in the matter, and he was prepared to go to any length to rescue his brother from the clutches of the enemy. After futile attempts to negotiate on other lines he was constrained to sign

the document presented by Husain, who went on his way rejoicing, while Sa'd was released to rejoin his brother. The Amir of Mecca had gained a tactical victory for the Turkish cause; but his adversary had obviously no intention of implementing the terms of the agreement. No tribute was ever paid, and the lip-service paid to the Sultan's suzerainty was soon to be revoked by an act which left no room for misunderstanding.

Ibn Sa'ud and his brother returned to Hariq: occupying the town whence the pretenders had fled on his approach to seek support among the citizens of Hauta. Their refusal to have anything to do with the rebellion forced Sa'ud ibn 'Abdul-'Aziz and his cousins to continue their flight to the Aflaj province, where his brother, Faisal, had established himself with some of the Hazzani leaders at al Saih. The rest of the province was however held securely for Ibn Sa'ud by the governor, Ahmad al Sudairi, who reported that on the arrival of news of his approach most of the pretenders had fled for refuge to the Sharif, while Sa'ud ibn 'Abdullah ibn Sa'ud and the Hazzani folk were prisoners in his hands at Laila. On Ibn Sa'ud's arrival, the prisoners were paraded before him. The Hazzani leaders were sentenced to death and executed on the spot, while, somewhat surprisingly, Sa'ud ibn 'Abdullah, the leader of the rebellion, was given a free pardon with the choice of joining his cousins in the Hijaz or remaining with him. He chose the latter alternative, and ever thereafter remained a loyal supporter of his sovereign.

Having disposed of his rebellious cousins, Ibn Sa'ud set out on a raid against the 'Ajman, who had harboured them and were a constant source of trouble. While he was there in the eastern desert, he received a message from Shaikh Mubarak, asking for his assistance against the Muntafiq and Dhafir on the marches of 'Iraq. After his recent experience with Jabir at Hadiya, however, he was in no mood to cooperate; but a second and more urgent message induced him to change his mind. He marched accordingly with a considerable force to Hafar al Batin, where the Dhafir chief, Hamud ibn Suwait, came in to make his peace with him: informing him at the same time that he had been warned in advance of his expedition by Mubarak himself, who was evidently still trying to secure a balance of power in the desert. Ibn Sa'ud then raided the Muntafiq at Kabida, and suddenly appeared at Safwan in the neighbour-

hood of Basra and Zubair. Whatever may have been the motive of this demonstration at a time when the Turks were on tenter-hooks at the spread of the Arab Nationalist movement in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere after the revolution of 1908, he readily agreed to withdraw on the arrival of a friendly deputation representing the Wali of Basra and the people of Zubair. He now proceeded to Jahra, near Kuwait, whence, after receiving the explanations and apologies of Mubarak for his recent equivocal attitude, he made another raid on the 'Ajman in Hasa territory.

It was at this time that the Turks, doubtless impressed by Ibn Sa'ud's growing stature in desert affairs, sought to bring him into their counsels as a make-weight against the nationalist movement in the settled lands on his borders. Sulaiman Shafiq Pasha, the Wali of Basra, was therefore commissioned to ascertain the attitude of the Wahhabi leader, and to seek his advice as to the best way of dealing with the situation.

His answer is on record, and is certainly interesting as being probably his first essay in long-term statesmanship. After a characteristic preamble, in which he laid the blame squarely on the Turks themselves for the troubles and dissensions by which they were beset in every part of their Arab empire: 'They had been content', he said, 'to be rulers without realising the responsibility of rulers to take thought for the welfare of their subjects.' If now they wanted peace in Arabia to be free to deal with their domestic troubles, they should try come to an understanding with the Arabs on a really voluntary basis. They should convene a meeting of all the chiefs, great and small without distinction, at some place not actually under Ottoman administration, so that there might be absolute freedom of speech. The general object of the meeting would be the establishment of harmony in the Arab lands, and friendship between them and the Ottoman Government; and their specific task would be a choice between two alternatives. Either the Arab countries should form a single group presided over by a ruler of their own choice; or the existing arrangement of separate political entities should continue on the basis of complete local administrative independence, each under its own ruler functioning as a Wali in a Turkish province, and with definite boundaries fixed, if necessary, through the good offices of the Turks. In either case the Arab lands would remain under the over-riding suzerainty of

the Sultan, who would be responsible for the organisation of the defence and development thereof, while every ruling unit would be expected to cooperate with its neighbours in safeguarding and promoting the common weal and in common action to deter or defeat aggression from any quarter. 'In this way alone', he ended, 'can your interests and ours be reconciled and served, and assured of protection against any external enemy.'

We are told that the Wali of Basra was sufficiently impressed by this statement to forward it to the Porte for consideration. And, perhaps inevitably, it seems to have been regarded there as an effort on the part of Ibn Sa'ud to establish his hegemony over the whole of Arabia with the support and at the expense of the Turkish Empire. Yet it might have been better for the Sublime Porte if it had chosen this moment of relative calm to trim its sails to the coming storm. Ibn Sa'ud, realising very soon that his proposals had fallen on deaf ears, had no alternative but to fend for himself with other arrangements. From time to time during the preceding dozen years he had tried in vain to interest the British Government, as the only Power with vital interests and effective strength in the Persian Gulf, in the idea of guaranteeing his position in Arabia against aggression from any quarter. But Britain had no stomach for involvement in desert adventures, and was far more interested in the diplomatic appeasement of Turkey to the utmost extent compatible with the protection of her interests in the Gulf. Thus, with the Turks in control of the Hasa province since 1871, and Britain in virtual possession of all the other outlets on the Arabian coast from Kuwait to Masqat, Ibn Sa'ud was shut into the desert and, even there, exposed to attacks from north and west by enemies enjoying the support and encouragement of the Turks, while his dependence on the far from certain loyalty of the tribes and towns of his own realm was always a source of grave weakness.

He must have spent many wakeful hours during these years of struggle in pondering ways and means of countering the vagaries of fate which had brought down his ancestors at intervals during the chequered history of the Wahhabi movement, on which the House of Sa'ud had built up a position of dominance in Arabia. And he himself had seen and played a prominent part in the collapse of the secular State of Muhammad ibn Rashid as soon as the strong hand of a great personality had been removed from the helm by death. Even the great Arab

Empire of the early days of Islam had been dissipated by incompetent leadership and the wilting of conviction in contact with the wealth and luxuries of the conquered provinces. Evidently there was some basic weakness in the constitution of desert society: capable as it was of heroic effort under the impulse of a great cause or a great personality, but temperamentally unable to maintain indefinitely the discipline necessary to develop the fruits of victory for the common good. The desert tribes and the city States were alike obsessed by a sense of local or parochial loyalty which overrode the greater patriotism and public spirit necessary to the maintenance of an ordered realm.

It was to this weakness that Ibn Sa'ud now addressed himself, determined to find a cure if possible. The history of his house readily suggested religion as the principal ingredient; and there can be no doubt that both he and his father were devout Wahhabis, though in the rough and tumble of these fighting years there is little record of any special emphasis on the religious aspect of their activities. Nevertheless it can be assumed that the idea of another Wahhabi revival had for some time been germinating in Ibn Sa'ud's mind as an important instrument of policy. He had however grafted a new conception on the normal type of such revivals, and had made a special point of concentrating the efforts of his missionaries on the Badawin tribes, with results which began to be apparent in 1912. In that year a mixed group of Harb and Mutair tribesmen, duly impressed by the warnings of everlasting retribution conveyed to them by the missionaries, gathered at Harma, near Majma'a, to seek further information on the matter from more authoritative sources. In this they received ready help from the local zealots, though their tendency to fanaticism and exclusive self-righteousness soon embroiled them with the other inhabitants.

The new fraternity, soon to become known as the Ikhwan, or Brethren, and now numbering some fifty men and their families, decided to migrate to less compromising surroundings. The wells of Artawiya, on the caravan route between Kuwait and the Qasim, were chosen as a suitable site for a hermit colony, which soon became the prototype of the militant religious cantonments, which sprang up in rapid succession all over the country, wherever suitable conditions for communal life existed. Ibn Sa'ud, who had started the process of regeneration among the tribes through his missionaries, placed all necessary facilities

at their disposal: money, seed and agricultural implements, religious teachers, and the wherewithal for building mosques, schools and dwellings: and, last but not least, arms and ammunition for the defence of the faith, the basic article of which was the renunciation of all the heathen customs and practices of the old tribal code. The brotherhood of all men who accepted the new order, regardless of their tribal affiliations and social status, canalised the warlike propensities of the Arabs in the service of God and his representative on earth. Inter-tribal raids, highway robbery, tobacco and other amenities of the old life became taboo; and all attention was concentrated in the colonies on preparation for the life hereafter.

The activities of the first fifty Ikhwan were widely canvassed in the tribes which they had abandoned; and recruits came in from near and far to swell their numbers. Artawiya rapidly became a town with a population of 10,000 souls at the peak of its development. Ghatghat soon followed suit in the Dhurma district with a nucleus of 'Ataiba converts, and in due course became second in zeal and importance to Artawiya alone. Villages sprang up in every suitable centre with surprising rapidity: each having a present stake in the land as well as a contingent one in eternity. And almost before the year was out Ibn Sa'ud found himself in command of a voluntary territorial army composed entirely of Badawin turned yeomen, on whose loyalty he could count to the death, though their undisciplined courage always needed a backing of steadier troops from the towns and villages to make them an effective force, while their fanatical zeal for the destruction of the infidel (a term liberally interpreted by them to include not only non-Muslims but also all Muslims who did not share their fundamentalist conception of the true faith) had often to be kept in check in the hour of victory, and in times of peace. Henceforth the armies of Ibn Sa'ud always included a contingent of Ikhwan levies, marching under their own banners in company with the still unregenerate Badawin and the steadier yeomen of the old citizen army. Each category had its special function to perform in the ensuing operations; but it was the Ikhwan who leavened the whole lump with that cachet of ferocity, which often stood Ibn Sa'ud in good stead in dealing with his enemies. These Ikhwan colonies were to run into hundreds in the coming years, as the movement spread out into the uttermost recesses of the Badawin world.

But pride of place in the roll of honour must be yielded to the earlier settlements, which set the pattern for the rest, and whose names are perhaps worthy of record. The Mutair converts settled at Artawiya, the capital of the new creed, and threw out offshoots to Mubaïdh and Budha, Furaithan and Mulaih, 'Ammar, Ithila and Artawi, Miska and Dhariya, and the two Qariyas. The Barqa section of 'Ataiba was responsible for Ghatghat of ferocious memory, and al Raudha, 'Arwa and Sanam: while the Ruqa section planted colonies at Dahina and al Suh, 'Arja and Sajir, 'Usaila and Kabshan and Nifi. The Harb settlements were Dukhna and Shubaika, Dulaimiya and Qurain, Saqiya and Hulaifa, Hunaidhil and Barud, Khusaiba and Qibah and Fawwara. Shammar converts colonised Banwan and Futaim, Qusair and Hafira, Ballaziya and Khabba, al Taim and Ajfar, Kahfa and Ghaidha and Baidha Nathil. 'Anaza elements settled at Shu'aiba and al Qulban and Shuqaiq: while the humble Hutaïm went to Khuraifat and al Masa' and Murair. Qahtan were responsible for Hayathim and Jafar and al Hasat (Hufaiyira), and the two Rains: while Dawasir colonised Mushairifa and Wusaita among other places. The 'Ajman were at Sarar and Hanina, Sahaf and al 'Uqair, 'Uraira and Nata: the 'Awazim at al Hassi and Thaj, al Hinnat and 'Utaïq; and there were mixed colonies at Shibak, Ubairiq and 'Ain Dar. The Subai' and Suhul Ikhwan settled in Dhubai'a and Bida', Munaisif and Akhdhar and Tasm and al Ruwaidha.

Such were the clans and their colonies, which formed the nucleus of a new dispensation which Ibn Sa'ud was soon to put to the test of action in the campaigns of the second stage of his advance to the hegemony of Arabia: campaigns which seem to have passed almost imperceptibly beyond the stage of the old parochial warfare on to the loftier plane of international conflict, with higher stakes at issue than any he had played for hitherto. That he owed much of his success to these Ikhwan contingents cannot be gainsaid, though they were in the end to put his statesmanship to a troublesome test, when the international obligations of the ruler began to conflict with the religious convictions of his subjects. The Najdi historian, writing of course after the event, explains how generous Ibn Sa'ud had been in fostering the colonies and enabling them to stand on their own feet. An Amir was appointed in each community

to see that civil justice was done as between the weak and the strong, while its spiritual needs were catered for by a prelate whose duty was to teach the principles of the faith and to interpret the sacred law. In addition the brethren were provided with food on a generous scale, with agricultural and other necessary equipment, and with arms and ammunition. 'So these colonies remained steadfast in the faith for fifteen years,' he comments, 'until their wealth and prosperity caused them to be puffed up with pride in themselves, and to boast that all the victories that had been won had been the outcome of their own prowess and virtue. That is what they thought,' he adds, 'but I shall have to discuss hereafter the consequences of their conduct.'

Expansion and Consolidation

By the end of 1912, when the Ikhwan movement had definitely taken root, and thus ensured the easy and rapid mobilisation of a powerful force inspired by a fanatical ideal, Ibn Sa'ud was the acknowledged master of Central Arabia, or Najd, from the Wadi Dawasir province in the south to the southern border of Jabal Shammar in the north, and from the western frontier of al Ahsa, under Turkish rule, to the eastern frontier of the Hijaz, also part of the Turkish Empire. These two Turkish provinces were linked by an arc of Turkish territory comprising 'Iraq and Syria, while Jabal Shammar, also acknowledging Ottoman suzerainty, formed a buffer State occupying the hinterland of 'Iraq, Syria and the northern part of the Hijaz, roughly above the 27th Parallel. At no point did the Wahhabi realm reach the sea, while on every side except the south, where the vast desert of the Rub' al Khali provided a natural defence line against the territories of the Indian Ocean coast, it was hemmed in by the colonial outposts of a traditionally hostile Power, whose position along the Red Sea was further strengthened by its occupation of the Yaman and 'Asir. At the southern end of the former lay the British Colony, and Protectorate of Aden, while the territory of Kuwait, the only interruption of the immense loop of Turkish possessions flanking the Wahhabi realm on three sides, was at this time under British protection or guarantee. Bahrain and the Trucial Coast, as well as the coastal rim of 'Uman and the ports of Hadhramaut were all more or less subject to British control or supervision or influence.

To add to Ibn Sa'ud's troubles, the whole of the territory under his rule was entirely devoid of natural resources of any kind. The date harvest within his frontiers was barely sufficient for the needs of the settled and nomad population; the wheat crop needed reinforcement from outside by cereal imports, including rice, which Ibn Sa'ud himself was the first to popularise as the staple diet of the well-to-do classes; the settled population de-

pended entirely on overseas sources for its clothing, while the Badawin had to make the best of their coarse home-spun garments. Meat, milk and clarified butter were plentiful in good seasons; but the eating of meat was a luxury among the Badawin who bred it, while the sale of milk was still regarded as shameful: only the butter was available both for consumption and sale. The breeding of camels was the main industry of the Badawin, who sold or hired their products for riding or burden-bearing or butcher's meat: while in the settled areas agriculture monopolised the attention of the people. 'Cottage' industries were negligible, and entirely directed to the supply of the simple needs of a poor and backward population. The economic situation was gloomy in the extreme, while the political outlook was scarcely encouraging. But 'Abdul-'Aziz, now in his prime with great achievements already standing to his credit, was not the man to adopt a fatalistic attitude in face of the problems now confronting him. And doubtless he drew comfort and encouragement from what was to be in later years one of his favourite quotations from the Quran: 'Verily God changeth not that which is in a people until they change that which is in themselves.'

It was at any rate not long before he was ready to put into operation the first instalment of his plans for the future. One might have thought in the circumstances of the time that the obvious first step to ensure the stability of his régime in the Arabian desert was the elimination of his immediate enemy, the Rashid dynasty of Hail. But 'Abdul-'Aziz was not of that opinion: possibly he reflected that the addition of Jabal Shammar to his realm at that time would merely have extended the area of his economic difficulties. Be that as it may, in February 1913, having already issued a summons for a general muster of his forces, he left Riyadh for the water-pools of al Khafs at the western edge of the 'Arma plateau, where plentiful pasture would be available for the animals of the various territorial detachments, as they arrived to form his army. While waiting for the completion of their mobilisation, and doubtless to distract attention from his real plans, he sent out a raiding party to attack the Murra tribe, and despoiled them to some effect.

A few forced marches then brought him within striking distance of Hufhuf, the capital of al Ahsa, which during the preceding winter months had been visited by a British traveller,

Captain G. E. Leachman, at the end of a great desert journey, beginning at Baghdad and passing after various adventures through Buraida to Riyadh, and ending on the Hasa coast. He had found the Turkish troops of the province reasonably cheerful in their distant exile, and nonchalantly resigned to spending the rest of their days in this wilderness. The last thing they could have contemplated, even in their dreams, was an early release from service in Arabia. Yet within less than five months of the Englishman's visit they had left the country for ever. The Turkish garrison of Hufhuf was some 1,200 strong; and there was a small detachment at Qatif, and some insignificant outposts scattered about the province.

Ibn Sa'ud spent the evening of May 8th preparing for his attack on the walled town and great fort, and giving his subordinate commanders precise instructions as to how the assault was to be carried out. Some date-palms of a small oasis near by were cut down, and roughly fashioned to serve as scaling-ladders, while the well-ropes, normally carried by all travellers in Arabia, were distributed to the members of the scaling party, to be let down from the walls when they had gained their first objectives. At midnight a start was made on foot, and by dawn the ladders were laid against the walls. A few sleepy sentries were silenced for ever; and before the garrison could recover from its bewilderment in the dark the great castle of al Kut was virtually in the hands of the Wahhabis. The Turks withdrew hastily to the Ibrahim Pasha mosque, and barricaded themselves there to await developments. Meanwhile one of the town gates had been seized, and Ibn Sa'ud's troops poured in, shooting off their muskets and shouting their war-cries to add to the confusion and excitement of the populace and, no doubt, to impress the enemy with a sense of the hopeless odds now pitted against them. A captured Turk was sent to his commander to demand surrender on Ibn Sa'ud's guarantee of the lives and property of the garrison, which would be conducted in safety to the coast for embarkation to Bahrain. Preparations were made to drive a mine under the buildings in which the main body of the enemy had taken refuge; and a warning was issued that it would be fired if their surrender were delayed.

The Turkish commander had little choice in the matter, and agreed to lay down his arms on the terms offered by Ibn Sa'ud. And in due course the whole garrison marched out of Hufhuf

under a Wahhabi escort commanded by Ahmad ibn Thunaian, a distant cousin of the Wahhabi leader. From there they sailed in what vessels were available to Bahrain, where however the Turkish commander decided to make an effort to restore the situation: sending fresh troops to 'Uqair, of whom some were captured on landing, while the rest re-embarked and returned to Bahrain. Ibn Sa'ud, coming down to 'Uqair in person, released and re-embarked the prisoners: after which he proceeded to Qatif, which gave him no trouble, and where the population swarmed out to greet their new ruler. Both here and in the towns and villages of al Ahsa he was able to replenish his sadly depleted stores and money-bags. A Turkish attempt to recover Qatif was easily foiled; and Ibn Sa'ud, well content with the month's work, returned rejoicing to his capital, after making suitable provision for the administration of his new province. Special attention was of course paid to the education of the largely Shia' population in the new ways, which would henceforth prevail. Mosques and schools were planned; trustworthy officials were appointed to posts involving the receipt and disbursement of money; the courts were reformed to operate in accordance with the Shar' law. And, last but by no means least, a new governor was appointed, who was to remain at his post until his death a quarter of a century later, and to become a legend in his lifetime. This was 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi, who had accompanied his cousin in the bold coup which had won back Riyadh in 1902, and had been Governor-General of the Qasim since its re-occupation by the Wahhabis. He had no doubt been consulted regarding Ibn Sa'ud's plans for his attack on al Ahsa, and had left Buraida with his sovereign just before the arrival of Leachman in the town in December 1912, when it was being administered by Fuhaid ibn Mu'ammār, in order to take part in the Ahsa expedition. Under the general control of 'Abdullah, 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Suwailim, who had led the detachment sent to occupy Qatif, was made Amir of the port: while 'Uqair was placed under the control of 'Abdul-Rahman ibn Khairallah, who was to remain there almost as long as his chief at Hufhuf.

With surprisingly little effort Ibn Sa'ud had won access to the Persian Gulf coast on a broad front, extending from Kuwait territory in the north to the Qatar principality and peninsula on the south. In the latter his old friend and ally, Qasim ibn

Thani, to whose rescue he had gone in 1905, died in this same year of his triumph in al Ahsa, at the ripe old age of 111 years: a man of legendary reputation, who had retained his mental and physical strength to the end, and was often seen riding forth of an afternoon with a posse of cavaliers, entirely composed of his sons and grandsons. He was succeeded by his son 'Abdullah, who always maintained cordial relations with his great neighbour, who in turn never interfered with the independence of the peninsula. The reaction of the Ottoman Empire to the loss of al Ahsa was surprisingly lethargic. Negotiations were opened with Ibn Sa'ud through Saiyid Talib al Naqib of Basra, while at the same time the Wali of Basra, Sulaiman Shafiq Kamali Pasha, was commissioned to discuss with Zamil al Subhan, acting on behalf of the young ruler of Ha'il, Sa'ud ibn Rashid, an arrangement for supplying him with money and arms for use against Ibn Sa'ud. The latter protested to Zamil against his breach of the terms of the truce existing at the time between the two States by the acceptance of a Turkish gift of 12,000 rifles, with corresponding quantities of ammunition and money, to be used against himself. And Zamil frankly enough replied that he was on the side of the Turks, as the suzerain Power, and would act in their interests where they impinged on his relations with Riyadh. Ibn Sa'ud accepted the implied challenge, and the truce was at an end. He was however not unaware of the extreme delicacy of his position; and he played safe in his talks with Saiyid Talib at Subaihiya near Kuwait, which ended in his giving a verbal undertaking to recognise the Sultan's suzerainty over his territory in return for Turkish arms and money, sufficient to enable him to ensure the security of his coastal province, which, with its rich agricultural assets and its Customs revenue, was already by far the richest jewel in his crown. Neither part of this tentative understanding was ever implemented; and the outbreak of war between Britain and Turkey in October 1914 put an end for ever to Turkish hopes of recovering al Ahsa.

In view of this development it is clear that Ibn Sa'ud had acted just in time to establish himself in al Ahsa, which would have fallen automatically to the British Expeditionary Force, then assembled at Bahrain. Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud had done his best to secure British sympathy and support for his position in al Ahsa in view of the virtual commitment of

Turkey in advance to the German cause. But British diplomacy was still busy, trying to stave off such a development; and when the British representative at Bahrain paid a courtesy visit to Ibn Sa'ud at 'Uqair after the fall of al Ahsa, he had no tangible comfort to offer the Wahhabi prince. And at the end of the year, when Captain W. H. I. Shakespear, the Political Agent at Kuwait, who had once before met Ibn Sa'ud at one of his desert camps, passed through Riyadh in the course of his great journey across Arabia, from Kuwait to Suez, he could only discuss the general implications of the new situation with him, and was unable to communicate to him certain information in his possession: which was in fact deliberately withheld from him by the British Government for seventeen years until 1930, when it had to produce its title deeds as residuary legatee of the Ottoman Empire in respect of territories which it had never possessed, and into which no Turk would ever have dared to venture. The complete absurdity of the claim is now universally recognised; but it was pursued quite seriously for some years after its disclosure, and its echoes still resound ominously in parts of the southern desert.

The information which Shakespear was not free to divulge to his host was that, within less than two months of Ibn Sa'ud's capture of the Ahsa province, a treaty had been signed on June 29th by a Turkish representative, Ibrahim Haqqi Pasha, and Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, for the clarification of the interests of their respective countries in respect of certain territories of the Persian Gulf area: Kuwait, Bahrain and the Trucial Coast States. All these places impinged in one way or another on al Ahsa, which was not even mentioned in the treaty, and was tacitly assumed to be still part of the Ottoman Empire! Provision was made for the ratification of this instrument within three months; but for some reason the date for ratification was extended to October 31st, 1914, the very day of Britain's declaration of war on the Ottoman Empire. But worse was to follow, and the negotiations to that end must have been well advanced at the time that Shakespear was exchanging friendly sentiments with Ibn Sa'ud at Riyadh. At any rate Shakespear had scarcely arrived at Suez when the same two negotiators in London put their signatures to another treaty on March 9th, 1914, which was duly ratified by both parties on June 3rd. Whether the Turks then had hopes of the recovery of

al Ahsa with British help or approval, or whether they were activated by motives of spite against Ibn Sa'ud, or whether the Turkish envoy acted from some more sordid motive, we shall presumably never now know. But the terms of the treaty provided for the partition of the whole of Arabia between the two Governments by the drawing of a straight line from the base of the Qatar peninsula across the desert to meet the eastern extremity of the demarcated 1902 boundary between the Aden Protectorate and the Yaman. The effect of it was to make everything north of the line Turkish territory, including not only al Ahsa but also Najd itself: and everything south thereof British territory. No wonder that the British Government was chary of letting Ibn Sa'ud into the secret of its machinations with his most powerful enemy: and less wonder that the belated revelation of this intrigue created the impression, prevalent ever since, that the British Government had assumed the traditional rôle of Turkey as the principal enemy of the Wahhabi régime. It may be said in passing that other factors, arising during and after the first world war, tended to confirm and strengthen this impression: and that quite recent events at Buraimi have done nothing to exorcise it.

On the outbreak of war in October 1914 Shakespear was recalled from leave and sent by Sir Percy Cox, then Chief Political Officer of the Expeditionary Force in Mesopotamia, to represent his country's interests at Riyadh. He was an ideal envoy, with a military background and a political flair for dealing with the Arabs: and he was already *persona grata* with Ibn Sa'ud. Perhaps his only fault, and a fatal one as it proved, was that he would not condescend to wear Arab dress in Arab lands, which had at that time developed a xenophobe tendency, exacerbated by religious fanaticism. By the time of his arrival the long expected hostilities between Hail and Riyadh had begun on the initiative of Ibn Rashid, who had no doubt been urged to take active steps for the elimination of the Wahhabi régime by his Turkish friends. In late December, or early January, he had come down well within the Sa'udi frontiers; and Ibn Sa'ud had already made his plans for countering his activities. Shakespear accompanied his host on this expedition, and actually took part in the battle of Jarab which ensued, not far from Zilfi. The Wahhabi infantry had the better of things on one wing, while the cavalry of Jabal Shammar carried the day on the other.

Shakespear, who was directing the fire of the Wahhabi guns, was killed in their charge; and the contending forces drew apart, each claiming victory in what was so obviously a drawn game. The death of Shakespear in January 1915 was a disaster not only for his own country, but also for Ibn Sa'ud, who was left to sulk in his tents, while developments in other parts of Arabia reduced him to a position of relative insignificance as a factor in Arabian politics. They also increased the number and strength of his enemies, of whom Ibn Rashid, with his Turkish background, was now regarded as a minor danger in comparison with Sharif Husain of the Hijaz and other chiefs in alliance with the British.

So far as Sir Percy Cox was concerned, he was not prepared to risk the lives of his officials amid the perils of the Arabian desert, which was in fact one of the safest places in the world at that time. But he himself had not lost interest in Ibn Sa'ud, with whom he maintained a long-range contact through the latter's agent at Basra, 'Abdul-Latif ibn Mandil. Meanwhile he had received the authority of His Majesty's Government to proceed on the lines suggested by Shakespear as the result of his discussions with Ibn Sa'ud. A draft treaty of friendship was accordingly sent to the latter for consideration and signature: and it had been returned by him duly signed, with some alterations. These necessitated further consideration, and it was not till the end of 1915 that Sir Percy Cox was able to meet Ibn Sa'ud himself at Qatif. Here a treaty was duly signed, in which Ibn Sa'ud's independence was recognised and guaranteed against foreign aggression within boundaries to be determined after the war, while he undertook not to attack the British protected principalities of the Persian Gulf. The then usual clauses regarding the alienation of territory to any foreign Power and the conduct of diplomatic relations with any such Power found places in the instrument. And the general attitude of good will towards his interests, demonstrated in the terms of the treaty, had incidentally been illustrated in advance during the preceding summer, when the British authorities had made him a present of 1,000 rifles and a sum of £20,000, while they had also given him facilities for importing ammunition on his own account from Bahrain. This was to meet the needs of a campaign he was conducting at the time against the rebel tribe of al 'Ajman, who were duly routed in September, and fled for refuge

to Kuwait. It is interesting to note that Sir Percy Cox, during these negotiations was reticent on an important matter which would have aroused the Wahhabi ruler's deepest interest, not to say concern. He was unable for obvious reasons to refer to the negotiations between Sir Henry Macmahon and Sharif Husain of Mecca, which were to result in the Arab Revolt of June 1916: but no mention was made in the treaty of the western frontier of Ibn Sa'ud's domain, a matter which was to be the source of much trouble thereafter.

On being told of the outbreak of the Arab Revolt, Ibn Sa'ud had adopted a correct attitude, but made no secret of his apprehension lest the known ambitions of Sharif (later King) Husain might some day impinge on his own interests. But, the British Government having now decided to support the Arab Revolt at all costs, it devolved on Sir Percy Cox to play the part of Job's comforter with assurances which did little to appease the wrath or allay the anxiety of Ibn Sa'ud. Meanwhile Shaikh Mubarak of Kuwait, who had become jealous and critical in his old age of one who might fairly be regarded as his pupil in politics, had died at the end of 1915. His elder son and successor, Jabir, was friendly enough towards Ibn Sa'ud; but his reign was too short to produce any tangible results: particularly in respect of the danger to Ibn Sa'ud's security inherent in the presence of the 'Ajman refugees in his territory. His brother, Salim, who succeeded him in 1916, was definitely hostile to Ibn Sa'ud, and made little attempt to conceal the fact. With the Hijaz, Jabal Shammar and Kuwait all in actual or potential conflict with him, and the British increasingly lukewarm, Ibn Sa'ud's position was scarcely enviable. He now pressed for another personal meeting with Sir Percy Cox, which duly took place at 'Uqair, ostensibly to discuss ways and means of enabling Ibn Sa'ud to press his long-quiescent campaign against Ibn Rashid: but actually, from Ibn Sa'ud's point of view, to enable him to elicit further enlightenment regarding arrangements made with the Sharif, who was already giving out that he had received formal recognition as "King of the Arabs".

Sir Percy Cox could only assure him that his independence was in no way prejudiced, and invited him to take part in a Durbar of Arab chiefs, arranged for November 20th, 1916, for the purpose of presenting decorations to himself and to Jabir. Here polite sentiments were duly exchanged, and Sir Percy Cox

was able to congratulate all present on the manifest signs of Arab unity at such a time of world crisis! Jabir did not long survive the receipt of his decoration, while Ibn Sa'ud accepted Sir Percy's invitation to visit Basra, as the guest of himself and the Commander-in-Chief. This was his first experience of foreign travel; and he was duly impressed by the sight of so much of the paraphernalia of modern war, while he was perhaps more intrigued by the fact that the most knowledgeable of his hosts was a mere woman, no less a person than Gertrude Bell. The practical outcome of this month of contacts at high level was an agreement, under which Ibn Sa'ud was to receive a monthly subsidy of £5,000 together with four machine-guns and 3,000 rifles with an ample supply of ammunition on the understanding that he would maintain a force of 4,000 men continuously in the field against Ibn Rashid, and attack his capital. But British official optimism regarding the extent of Arab unity in support of the Allied cause achieved during these proceedings was sadly misplaced. And within twelve months friction and mistrust and jealousy had resumed their sway in Arab politics; and the first shots had been fired of a war which would end in the fall of Husain and the addition of the Hijaz and its holy cities to the Wahhabi realm.

From the beginning of 1917 onwards, apart from the need of diverting Ibn Sa'ud's attention from Allied activities in the Hijaz by encouraging him to take action against Ibn Rashid, the main concern of Sir Percy Cox was the blockade of the Turkish positions beyond the limits of occupied Mesopotamia. The scarcity of supplies in Syria, and the high level of prices for all foodstuffs and piecegoods, had created an ideal market for the smuggler. From Iraq itself and the Persian Gulf ports Arab carriers brought their contraband goods across the Arabian desert to Damascus. Shaikh Salim of Kuwait winked at their operations in his territory, and took toll of the profits in advance, while the merchants of the Qasim and other parts of Ibn Sa'ud's territory carried their merchandise to Ha'il, whence it was forwarded to the Turks. Ibn Sa'ud was expected to stop this traffic as an integral part of his campaign against Ibn Rashid; but there is no doubt that some caravans slipped through. The unfriendly relations now subsisting between Kuwait and Riyadh were another matter of concern to the Civil Commissioner at Baghdad; partly because it created unrest in the hinterland of

the Mesopotamian operations, and mainly because it increased the facilities for smuggling. Also the position of the 'Ajman in Kuwait territory, which they could with impunity use as jumping-off places for raids against the tribes of Najd was a matter on which he had promised to take action to Ibn Sa'ud's satisfaction.

There were also other minor matters, such as the rate of Customs duty charged at Kuwait and Bahrain on goods destined for Najd, and the possibility of arranging a small-coin currency for the every-day needs of the country. All these matters had come to a head by the autumn of 1917, when the High Commissioner in Egypt, Sir Reginald Wingate, began to press for more positive action with Ibn Sa'ud, to induce him to bring pressure on Hail at a moment when the Arab Revolt had spent some of its initial impetus, and threatened to degenerate into a pointless stalemate. In this connection it was that 'Colonel' Lawrence had been sent down to Jidda to put new life into the movement while another representative of Sir Reginald Wingate, Mr (afterwards Sir) Ronald Storrs was sent to Baghdad to discuss the general situation with Sir Percy Cox. The latter suggested that Storrs, with his wide knowledge of the other side of the case, should go to Ibn Sa'ud as his own representative, with a view to putting up considered proposals in due course for removing the causes of friction between the two principal Arab friends of Great Britain.

Unfortunately this ingenious scheme came to nought, as Storrs fell a victim to sunstroke on the way, and had to leave Arabia in a hurry. Sir Percy Cox, somewhat discouraged by the experiences of his second envoy to Ibn Sa'ud, did not give up hope of tackling the knotty problem. And after long consultations by telegram between Baghdad and Cairo it was arranged that he should send a small mission to Riyadh, while Storrs should join it there by way of the Hijaz. The latter part of this arrangement was blocked from the start by King Husain, who declined to accept any responsibility for the safety of Storrs owing to the disturbed state of the desert. In November 1917 Sir Percy Cox's representatives landed at 'Uqair; and, proceeding *via* the Ahsa oasis where a few days were spent in the hospitality of the famous 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi, arrived at Riyadh by the end of the month to discuss the whole situation with Ibn Sa'ud. Having done this and reported back to Baghdad, the

mission proceeded with Ibn Sa'ud's blessing to the Hijaz, arriving at Taif on Christmas Day without adventure, though to the surprise and indignation of King Husain, whose hand was forced to arrange for the continuation of its journey to Jidda. It had been hoped that Storrs would be able to join the mission for discussions here; but Jerusalem had fallen to the British Army of General Allenby, and Storrs had become its first Governor. Instead of him Commander D. G. Hogarth arrived at Jidda, and in due course King Husain arrived from Mecca to receive his visitors from east and west. The ensuing discussions proved entirely abortive owing to the King's absolute refusal to take Ibn Sa'ud seriously: particularly on the issue of the ownership of Khurma, which had been attacked in December by an expedition from Mecca, and which had appealed to Ibn Sa'ud to do his duty in defending his subjects.

The mission returned to Ibn Sa'ud by sea *via* Basra. Sir Percy Cox had now left Iraq to be British Minister in Teheran, while Arnold Wilson had taken his place as Civil Commissioner. Ibn Sa'ud was obviously in no mood to tolerate further provocation from King Husain in the matter of Khurma, which now became the touchstone of British sincerity, although in fact two further attacks on the oasis were made from Mecca during the summer of 1918 without active reaction on his part, except that he formally announced that he would march against the Sharif in the event of any further act of aggression. Meanwhile all the energies of the mission were directed towards impressing on him the urgent need of action on his part against Hail, if he desired the continuance of British aid. He promised to open his campaign in August, and was as good as his word: penetrating into the heart of Jabal Shammar, and despoiling the Badawin outposts of Ibn Rashid to some effect, and appearing before Hail itself, which was however too strong to justify an assault without artillery preparation. Ibn Sa'ud returned to Buraida, where the mission had to inform him that the British Government was no longer interested in the fate of Ibn Rashid, as the Turks were by now virtually out of the war. This was scarcely welcome news to the Wahhabi prince, who was now left once more to his own devices, while the victorious allies were too busy scrambling for mandates and other advantages at the Peace Conference and elsewhere to give a thought to the souring temper of the Arab world.

But Ibn Sa'ud was to bring them, or Great Britain at least, to a sense of Arabian realities before many months were out: months incidentally of domestic tragedy for himself, as a severe epidemic of Spanish influenza during the winter of 1918/9 carried off his eldest son, Turki, with two other sons and his principal wife, Jauhara. It was King Husain who trailed his coat before the angry Wahhabi when, in May 1919, he sent his second son 'Abdullah in command of a strong expeditionary force with instructions to capture Khurma at all costs. 'Abdullah reached Turaba, where he tarried awhile in a strongly fortified camp, dealing with certain citizens of the oasis suspected of disloyalty, before proceeding to the main objective of his expedition. Meanwhile a strong Wahhabi force had reached Khurma in fulfilment of Ibn Sa'ud's promise to defend the oasis in the event of a fourth attempt on it by the Sharif. Disaffected persons in Turaba hastened to inform Khalid ibn Luwai, the Amir of Khurma, of the dispositions of 'Abdullah's camp; and in the dead of night that camp was attacked from all sides at once by the fanatical Ikhwan, who proceeded to slaughter the helpless defenders, while 'Abdullah and his staff made good their escape on horseback at the first alarm, as also did some of the Badawin levies which had accompanied his force and camped outside the fortified perimeter. The *débâcle* was complete: the guns, rifles and ammunition of the expeditionary force and all its camp furniture and stores fell into the hands of the Wahhabis; and Ibn Sa'ud himself arriving on the scene a day or two later, completed the victory by annexing the oasis to his own realm.

In fairness to King Husain it should be noted that earlier in the year he had informed the British Government of his intention of occupying Khurma, and had asked for its blessing on his enterprise. In the middle of March, accordingly, Lord Curzon had convened a departmental conference to consider the matter; and the conference had decided almost unanimously that, in view of the virtual certainty that the well-trained, well-equipped armies of the Sharif would easily defeat the Wahhabi levies, however fanatical, and of settled British policy to support the Sharifian cause if that could be done without risk of involving the British Government in military adventures in the desert, the oasis of Khurma should be adjudged as part of the Hijaz kingdom, and the Sharif allowed to take such steps as he thought necessary to assert his rights therein. At the same time it was

decided to communicate this decision to Ibn Sa'ud, with a suitable warning to refrain from interfering in the matter on pain of forfeiting the good will of the British Government and its monthly subsidy of £5,000. As we have seen Ibn Sa'ud ignored the warning and the threat, mobilised his Ikhwan army, and set out for Khurma by forced marches. He himself had only reached the Sakha wells when the advance column of his force had attacked and annihilated 'Abdullah's army.

The fat was now in the fire; and Lord Curzon once more summoned his departmental committee to discuss the result of its earlier decision. Meanwhile the orders of the Government regarding the discontinuance of Ibn Sa'ud's subsidy had been automatically telegraphed by a zealous official to Sir Arnold Wilson, to whom by a lucky chance it was delivered personally by a telegraph boy as he was going for a drive. On glancing at the contents, he had the wit to consign the missive to his pocket and 'forget' all about it. As for Lord Curzon's committee, it now met with the comfortable feeling that something at least had been done to vindicate British authority, and to show Ibn Sa'ud that he could not with impunity disregard the wishes and warnings of His Majesty's Government. But it was called upon to consider more serious matters, for the British authorities at Jidda had reported that Mecca and Jidda were in panic at the thought of the arrival of the Wahhabis in their midst, and that thousands of pilgrims, 11,000 of them being British subjects who could not be left to their fate without affecting British honour, had taken refuge at the port. Eleven ships would be required urgently to convey them to safety; but in the state of shipping stringency of those days the Admiralty representative was instructed to inform the committee that not a single ship could be diverted for the purpose. The War Office representative reported that no troops were available to defend the refugees. The suggestion that Ibn Sa'ud would not advance on Jidda or Mecca was scouted as ridiculous, and was in any case not supported by the reports of the man on the spot. There seemed to be no remedy for the situation; but an envoy was sent out by aeroplane to appease Ibn Sa'ud, and if possible divert him from his intention of occupying the Hijaz; and six aeroplanes were despatched in their packing cases to Jidda to bomb the Wahhabis in case of need. These were never taken out of their cases; and the envoy, on reaching General Allenby's head-

quarters—he was then High Commissioner in Egypt—was informed that Ibn Sa‘ud had withdrawn his victorious army from Turaba to Riyadh. He had merely added Turaba to his dominions, and the British Government let it go at that.

It also invited Ibn Sa‘ud to send a representative to London to discuss the whole position; and the visit took place during the winter months of 1919, with the Amir Faisal, then aged fourteen, in charge of the Wahhabi mission, which created a sensation in London and elsewhere, and a very good impression in Government circles. It was tacitly assumed that the Khurma issue had been settled, with the addition of Turaba, by the facts of the situation. It was also assumed by the British Government that Ibn Sa‘ud’s subsidy had been in abeyance since the previous May, and there was no question of restoring it without some *quid pro quo*; but here a surprise, and an unpleasant one, was in store for the departmental committee. The statement that the subsidy had been discontinued was challenged, but officially and categorically re-affirmed by the appropriate authorities. But, as the recipients of Britain’s bounty were actually in London, it was not difficult to ascertain beyond a peradventure that they had been in receipt of their allowances right up to date. This caused a mild sensation, but there was now no question of stopping the subsidy. Other matters of mutual interest were discussed, and the mission in due course returned to Arabia.

Meanwhile the position in ‘Iraq was becoming ever more delicate, with Sharif Faisal, now King of Syria, working assiduously underground to undermine the British imperial arrangements, which Sir Arnold Wilson was developing on an impressive scale in Mesopotamia. Early in 1920 the rebellion broke out; and the whole question of British policy in that area came under critical review. The Government eventually decided that Sir Percy Cox should be recalled from Teheran to discuss a more liberal policy in ‘Iraq, which he, in the capacity of High Commissioner, was commissioned to introduce. The journey by sea to Basra gave Cox the opportunity of renewing contact with Ibn Sa‘ud, who came down to meet him at ‘Uqair. The main point of Ibn Sa‘ud’s present concern was the rumoured intention of the British Government to offer the crown of ‘Iraq to Sharif Faisal, who had by now lost his throne in Syria owing to difficulties with the French, which had come to a head at the battle of Maisalun in July 1920. Cox was able to discount

Wahhabi anxiety on this score, as it had been definitely settled that no final step should be taken in 'Iraq until he had been able to study the situation and report his views and recommendations. Incidentally at this time he was by no means sympathetic towards the idea of putting Lawrence's candidate, who had to some extent been responsible for the rebellion, in charge of the country. The question of Ibn Rashid was also discussed in general terms, but it was obvious that Cox regarded him now as a useful factor in the maintenance of a balance of power in the desert; and Ibn Sa'ud doubtless registered the conclusion that his own position might again be challenged, with British encouragement—Ibn Rashid's envoy was actually at Baghdad at this time negotiating with Gertrude Bell—by his old rival of Jabal Shammar.

He evidently decided that he would have to fend for himself against the actual and potential enemies, who formed a ring round the northern frontiers of his territory. His first step, however, was to send the young Amir Faisal with a strong force to occupy the 'Asir highlands and the oases fringing them towards the desert: the object of this move was to consolidate the advantage already won at Khurma and Turaba, whose line of defence against possible aggression from the west was thus extended through Ranya and Bisha to Khamis Mushait and Abha, where he was in a position to dominate all the highland tribes up to the borders of the Taif province.

His next move provided Ibn Sa'ud with an indispensable stepping-stone to the greater ambitions, which he had now definitely begun to harbour. Sa'ud ibn Rashid had been shot dead by a cousin, 'Abdullah ibn Talal, during a picnic in 1920. The assassin was immediately cut down by his victim's slaves; and his brother, Muhammad ibn Talal, was imprisoned by 'Abdullah ibn Mit'ab, a grandson of Ibn Sa'ud's old enemy, 'Abdul-'Aziz ibn Mit'ab ibn Rashid, who now ascended the throne. His weakness as a ruler was reflected in the general feebleness of his State, now being vigorously courted by Shari'ian elements, which grew ever stronger as Fate began to point to Sharif Faisal as the destined King of 'Iraq. Ibn Sa'ud could no longer afford to dally in regard to Hail. Its control would make him master of all the desert, while its domination by any Sharifian element would make his own position in Arabia precarious in the extreme. In the spring of 1921 he despatched his

brother Muhammad northwards in command of a Wahhabi force, while Faisal al Duwish with his Ikhwan levies supported him on the east, and Nuri al Sha'lan of the Ruwala of Syria helped by bringing pressure to bear on the Jauf oases. These operations were of a probing character, while simultaneously Mr Winston Churchill was holding his famous conference in Cairo to determine the future shape of the Middle East. The principal decision was that Faisal should become King of 'Iraq, while Sharif 'Abdullah, the hero of the battle of Turaba, had disconcerted the assembled consultants by arriving from Mecca at 'Amman with a large force and the declared intention of attacking the French in Syria. He was bought off this rather inconvenient venture by the offer of the Amirate of Trans-Jordan: which fact, coupled now with the certainty that his brother would reign at Baghdad, left Ibn Sa'ud no time for reflexion. He now took the Hail campaign in deadly earnest: assuming the command of his expeditionary force himself, and appearing before Hail in the autumn, soon after the coronation of Faisal at Baghdad. His demand that the Rashid dynasty should abdicate and its principal members place themselves at his disposal was rejected by a deputation of citizens, which attended on him in his camp, and also by 'Abdullah ibn Mit'ab, when the matter was reported to him. But the latter was already near the end of his tether. To meet the desperate situation in the north, where Jauf was in grave danger of capture by Nuri Sha'lan, he had released Muhammad ibn Talal from prison to take command of a relief force. The latter, on returning to Hail, staged a rising against his weak and vacillating cousin, who incontinently fled for refuge to Ibn Sa'ud, whose honoured guest at Riyadh he remained till his death in 1947.

Ibn Sa'ud himself appears to have returned to his capital just before this development; but the more vigorous conduct of the war by the new Amir, Muhammad ibn Talal, who was even taking the offensive against the Wahhabi detachments encircling Hail at a respectful distance, forced him to reassume the initiative. He arrived at al Baqa'a, east of Hail, on September 8th, just after Faisal al Duwish and his Ikhwan had beaten off an attack in force by Muhammad, who had his main field army here, while he trusted to the walls and fortifications of Hail to keep any enemy at a distance. Ibn Sa'ud now developed the attack on Muhammad's positions at Baqa'a with considerable

vigour; and one by one the forts fell, while Muhammad escaped to Hail by way of Jabal 'Aja. He must have seen that the odds against him were hopeless, and he did now make an offer to surrender on condition that he should remain Amir of Jabal Shammar under Ibn Sa'ud's overlordship. This condition was unacceptable to the latter, who made his dispositions for pressing the siege, and arrayed his guns for the bombardment of the town. At the request of certain well-disposed persons among the citizens, he agreed to withhold his fire for a reasonable period to give them time to arrange the peaceful surrender of the town, whence Muhammad ibn Talal had sent a piteous appeal for help to the British authorities in 'Iraq and to King Faisal. After some weeks of patience, Ibn Sa'ud sent an ultimatum to his friends in the town, announcing his intention of beginning his bombardment if it had not surrendered within three days. That was enough for all except Muhammad, who shut himself up in his castle to fight to the end, while the gates of the town were opened to Ibn Sa'ud on November 2nd, 1921. Muhammad was soon induced to surrender on a guarantee of personal immunity; and he too took the way to Riyadh, to live there in all honour and comfort, and to become in due course a father-in-law of the great king, who had extinguished his dynasty after a tenure of nearly ninety years since its elevation to the Amirate of Hail by the king's own grandfather in the first year (1834) of his reign. Muhammad ibn Talal was murdered by one of his own slaves at Riyadh in February 1954.

Just before this Hail campaign Ibn Sa'ud had convened a conference of tribal chiefs and principal representatives of the ecclesiastical hierarchy at Riyadh to discuss the situation confronting the country; and the conference had concurred in his suggestion that, in order to give Najd an international status comparable with that of its neighbours, he should assume the title of Sultan of Najd and its Dependencies. This decision was duly communicated to the High Commissioner at Baghdad, and in due course endorsed by the British Government. The elimination of Hail now confirmed his new status, and relieved him of all anxiety as regards any possible intervention in the affairs of Najd by the Sharifian elements round its borders, with or without British encouragement. And he was now in a position to take the next step in his programme, which envisaged

the extension of his effective dominion to the logical limits of the desert.

In 1922 accordingly he pushed forward his Ikhwan levies into the Jauf and Wadi Sirhan districts, which had formed an integral part of the Jabal Shammar Amirate up to as recently as 1920, although the murder of Sa'ud ibn Rashid, and the resulting collapse of Rashidi authority had tempted Nuri Sha'lan, the Ruwala chief, with the encouragement of Sharif 'Abdullah of Trans-Jordan and the acquiescence of the British authorities, who were at that time interested in the idea of a strategic railway linking 'Aqaba with Baghdad, to occupy these tracts. The Ikhwan had little difficulty in establishing themselves in part of the Sakaka district, with the encouragement and active support of Hamad ibn Muwaishir and other local notables, who had adopted the Wahhabi tenets. And a probing expedition was sent into Trans-Jordan itself, reaching as far as the railway and killing the inhabitants of a small village near Ziza, before they were attacked and driven out of the country in confusion and with severe losses by the Royal Air Force armoured cars and planes from 'Amman. This was in August, and in the autumn the Ikhwan attacked the Ruwala at Minwa in the district of the 'Salt Villages', centring round Kaf. The Ruwala, without help, could not hope to withstand the might of Ibn Sa'ud; and, when his main body arrived at Jauf, its inhabitants made their submission without further ado, and renounced their allegiance to Nuri Sha'lan: while the Wadi Sirhan settlements accepted the new dispensation as a matter of course. Meanwhile the oases of Khaibar and Taima near the Hijaz border, which had been under the jurisdiction of Hail since the time of Muhammad ibn Rashid, had also been occupied by Wahhabi detachments. And Ibn Sa'ud was, by the end of 1922, in effective occupation of all the desert oases of the Arabian peninsula from the marches of the Fertile Crescent to the Empty Quarter, with a ring of Sharifian States round the northern periphery of his realm. The open hostility of King Husain, and the discreetly veiled enmity of his sons in 'Iraq and Trans-Jordan, both under British mandates, to say nothing of the obvious ambitions of Ibn Sa'ud, combined to create an explosive situation, which the British Government could no longer afford to ignore.

Towards the end of 1921 Sir Percy Cox, who cannot be accused of hostile feelings towards Ibn Sa'ud, though he was

primarily interested in the security and prosperity of 'Iraq, had induced the Wahhabi Sultan to send a mission to 'Baghdad for the purpose of discussing frontiers. The question of Kuwait was easily enough settled, and its frontier with Najd laid down, together with the line of a neutral zone to ensure against accidental conflicts. And after some stiff argument the Wahhabi mission was induced to sign a 'Treaty of Muhammara', in which the boundary between Najd and 'Iraq was defined. Ibn Sa'ud however repudiated the signature of his representative on the ground that he had exceeded his instructions, and that the proposed frontier was unacceptable to him, in that it made no provision for the exercise of their immemorial grazing rights by the neighbouring Najdi tribes in the area reserved for 'Iraq. He therefore proposed the reconsideration of the whole matter in personal discussions between himself and Sir Percy Cox, whom he invited to meet him at 'Uqair during the winter of 1922/3. The invitation was accepted; and by the time that the meeting took place Ibn Sa'ud was at the height of his power and prestige as the ruler of all desert Arabia. He was by no means enamoured of Sir Percy Cox's ideal of a fixed frontier owing to the traditional Badawin situation in the area concerned; but Sir Percy Cox had his way in the end by making a substantial concession on this issue, and it was agreed in the 'Protocol of 'Uqair', to be read with the Treaty of Muhammara, that, in order to make access to the wells and pastures of the area concerned a reality for both parties, no forts or permanent buildings should be constructed by either within a certain distance of the frontier or in an agreed neutral zone.

The definitive line now protecting 'Iraq and Kuwait from any aggression by the Wahhabis, and the securing of the other Persian Gulf States against Ibn Sa'ud's interference by specific treaty provisions, were certainly triumphs of Sir Percy Cox's diplomatic skill. But Ibn Sa'ud was left with a sense of grievance, in that his interests in the west and north, where he had important territorial situations and claims for confirmation or settlement, had not been considered. In consequence the effective limitation of his ambitions in the east inevitably diverted his attention to other directions; and the British Government in 1923 was forced to take cognisance of the dangerous possibilities of such a situation: particularly in relation to Trans-Jordan where incidents were of frequent occurrence in the absence of

a frontier. The Hijaz was also a moral liability of His Majesty's Government, though its interest in King Husain and his limitless ambitions had begun to wane when, in 1921, he turned a deaf ear to the persuasive efforts of Lawrence to secure his endorsement of British policy in Palestine. The British Government could scarcely entertain any territorial ambitions in respect of the Muslim holy land of the Hijaz; and it was doubtful if it could establish therein a position of effective political influence in the face of King Husain's now intransigent attitude. But it had already secured from the king's own prodigal sons what it wanted in the 'Fertile Crescent'; and the annual subsidies it was still paying to the various Arab States might be regarded as deterrents to any very egregious act of aggression by any of them. Nevertheless these subsidies could not be expected to continue for ever; and it was important to secure a general political settlement of all Arabian problems with the least possible delay.

In these circumstances the British Government proposed that a conference should be held at Kuwait in November 1923, over which a senior British officer with wide judicial experience should preside (the officer selected being Colonel S. G. Knox who had previously served at Kuwait and Masqat and in 'Iraq), while all interested elements should be represented by accredited delegates. 'Iraq and Ibn Sa'ud concurred in the idea without demur or condition precedent: and it may be noted in passing that at the beginning of this year Ibn Sa'ud had acted on a suggestion by Sir Percy Cox in granting an oil concession, covering the whole of eastern Arabia, to a British company, the Eastern General Syndicate, for a nominal rental of £2,000 a year. King Husain objected to the proposed conference as being entirely unnecessary when the merits of the matters to be discussed were so obvious to any sensible person; and the Amir 'Abdullah refused to send delegates unless his father did. After long argument the conference did assume more or less representative shape; and the British Government had announced in advance that all subsidies hitherto paid by it to the Arab States would be terminated as from March 31st, 1924, while the amounts calculated as due up to that date would be paid in advance. This was done, and the Arab delegates assembled with the comfortable feeling that they had nothing to lose by intransigence.

Yet it was the British Government which queered the pitch of

the conference before the match began: the British president being briefed in detail as to the results expected by his superiors from the deliberations of the delegates. One of these expectations was indeed sufficient of itself to ensure that there would be no results at all. The British Government actually demanded of Ibn Sa'ud that he should cede Khurma and Turaba to King Husain in return for the concession of Wadi Sirhan and the 'Salt Villages', which he already virtually controlled since his occupation of Jauf, and which he could physically occupy whenever he cared to do so. The conference managed to spend about six months in the process of petering out. King Husain, determined to demonstrate his authority over his children, came up to Trans-Jordan in state in January 1924, and ostentatiously assumed the direction of affairs, with all his three sons in dutiful attendance: to the amazement, consternation and annoyance of Sir Herbert Samuel, the High Commissioner for Palestine and Trans-Jordan. Sharif 'Ali, the eldest son of the king, was appointed to the control of the Hijaz Railway with instructions to re-establish full communication with Madina; and he was seriously considering the replacement of his son 'Abdullah by 'Ali as Amir of Trans-Jordan, when an event occurred, which changed the course of Arabian history. Mustafa Kamal Pasha, the Turkish Dictator, had decided that the time was ripe for the abolition of the historic office of the Caliphate, and had duly deposed the last of the Califs, 'Abdul Majid Khan, who had been allowed to retain his religious dignities when the Ottoman Sultanate was abolished. King Husain snatched eagerly at the Prophet's mantle, and had himself proclaimed Calif with suitable ceremony. And thereafter, waiting only to receive the homage of Trans-Jordan and 'Iraq, and of other elements in the Fertile Crescent, whose outlook had been primarily Sharifian since the war, he made urgent preparations to return to Mecca. 'Abdullah and Trans-Jordan were re-prieved; and the British Government put an end to the moribund proceedings of the Kuwait Conference.

The scene was set for the coming tragedy: on which, within less than six months after the breakdown of the Kuwait talks, the curtain went up on September 3rd with the massacre of Taif. Ibn Sa'ud had spent the summer in preparations for a final settlement with the King of the Hijaz, whose usurpation of the Caliphate had definitely provided justification for

a holy war, to which he now summoned all the forces at his disposal. A probing force, probably not intended to be anything more than a demonstration of strength to deter any action on the part of King Faisal, ranged along the marches of 'Iraq; but no incident occurred, and the Wahhabis did not cross the frontier. Another force of about a thousand Ikhwan was sent north, penetrating far into Trans-Jordan, and massacring the inhabitants of a small village near the railway, before it was driven off with heavy losses by the Royal Air Force. And no sooner had the world begun to consider the implications of these activities, than it was horrified by reports of the fall of Taïf, accompanied by a general massacre. The reports, coming from Sharifian sources, were exaggerated for obvious reasons; but there was some ground for them.

Sultan ibn Bijad, the ferocious chief of Ghatghat, had led his purely Ikhwan army across the desert, and suddenly fallen upon the summer capital of the Hijaz, where Sharif 'Ali was in residence and in command of the Hijazi troops. There was virtually no resistance to the enemy; 'Ali and his army fled along the route to Hada, on the escarpment overlooking the Meccan foothills and the plain; and their flight was accompanied and impeded by thousands of civilians, inhabitants of Taïf or summer visitors, who had no desire to make the closer acquaintance of the Wahhabis. Some of these pursued the retreating troops and refugees, killing all stragglers and bringing 'Ali's troops to battle at Hada, whence they fled in confusion down the steep flank of the mountain: 'Ali himself, considering discretion the better part of valour, by-passed Mecca on his way to Jidda, to avoid a meeting with his outraged parent. Sultan ibn Bijad, with the remainder of his force, now subjected the inhabitants of Taïf to a reign of terror: killing the ungodly and plundering everybody. Actually the number of persons killed did not exceed some 300 in all, including those who fell in the course of their flight and at Hada; but that was enough to create panic in distant Mecca and Jidda. But for the time being these were spared by the urgent orders of Ibn Sa'ud to his zealous lieutenant, who was instructed to avoid military activities in the sacred area at all costs, and to await his arrival before taking steps to occupy Mecca, where King Husain had declared his intention of remaining at whatever risk to himself. But he had now lost control of the situation: and it was the citizens of Jidda who,

now faced by a graver danger than the wrath of the old king, took their courage in both hands, and demanded his abdication in favour of his son 'Ali, who would at least have a better chance of coming to terms with the Wahhabis, or Ibn Sa'ud.

So King Husain left Mecca for ever after a reign of sixteen years, of which the latter half had been spent in effective independence as king. Accompanied by his women-folk and his treasure, he embarked at Jidda for 'Aqaba: whence before long he was forced by the British authorities to depart for Cyprus, lest his presence might tempt the Wahhabis to push their advance northwards before the British were ready to occupy 'Aqaba, as they did later in the summer of 1925. Sharif 'Ali now succeeded his father as king of the Hijaz: making no claim to the wider sphere envisaged by the latter or to the Califate, which now passed into abeyance once more, and for good. Ibn Sa'ud was in no haste to develop the situation, and it was not till early in December that he arrived at Mecca: entering it in pilgrim robes, as the last and only representative of his dynasty to visit Mecca, Sa'ud II, had done for the ninth and last time in 1812. Sultan ibn Bijad had already occupied the holy city without opposition after the flight of Husain, and had calmed the fears of its frightened citizens in respect of their lives and property, though the palaces of the Sharifs were delivered over to pillage, and all domed tombs of the original Islamic saints in the Ma'la cemetery and other localities destroyed, as they had been once before on the capture of Mecca by Sa'ud II.

Ibn Sa'ud was now preoccupied with arrangements for occupying the rest of the Hijaz, whose unruly tribes had to be taught a few hard lessons to convince their sceptical minds that the peace of the Wahhabis was to have nothing in common with the chaos of Sharifian days. And there were of course the two outstanding problems of Jidda and Madina to be dealt with: problems requiring a mixture of tact and determination with force, lest unbridled violence, with attendant atrocities, might stir up trouble with foreign Powers, or wound the susceptibilities of certain Islamic communities. Meanwhile 'Ali and his military advisers had surrounded Jidda with a weak barbed-wire fence, covered at intervals by minefields of questionable utility; and it was against these positions that Ibn Sa'ud assembled his forces and guns within the low folds of the coastal hills about ten miles from the town. The Wahhabi bombard-

ment began on January 3rd, 1925, and continued in desultory fashion till the end of March, when Ibn Sa'ud withdrew his army to Mecca for the summer recess, which in this year included the Ramdhan fast, in April, and the pilgrimage at the beginning of July: the latter being the first pilgrimage to be celebrated under Wahhabi auspices for more than a century and attended by a vast concourse of the people of Najd, with such foreign elements as were able to make the journey by way of the ports of Lith and Rabigh, which had both been occupied and made available for the purpose by Ibn Sa'ud. It was incidentally attended by Eldon Rutter, an English Muslim, who later published an admirable account of his experiences in the Hijaz during its first year under Wahhabi occupation.

During the summer preparations were of course made for the resumption of hostilities in the autumn, when the Amir Faisal came down from Najd with a large and well-equipped force, part of which was diverted to Madina under another young son of the Wahhabi Sultan, named Muhammad. The situation in both towns was becoming desperate, and virtually hopeless: the food and water available proving quite inadequate for communities swollen by countless refugees from the surrounding districts, where the Wahhabis were operating freely. In both cases Ibn Sa'ud had rigorously forbidden anything in the nature of an assault on the slender defences: while he himself spent part of the autumn in conference with Sir Gilbert Clayton in Wadi Fatima in negotiating the treaties of Hadda and Bahra, to settle all outstanding issues between the Wahhabi Sultanate and the mandated territories of 'Iraq and Trans-Jordan, including the frontier of the latter down to a point, beyond which no agreement was possible owing to Ibn Sa'ud's resolute refusal to recognise the British occupation by force during the summer of the port and district of 'Aqaba.

The deadlock on this issue remains unresolved to this day, although a *de facto* line has been respected by both parties. *Pari passu* with these negotiations the sieges of Jidda and Madina proceeded in desultory fashion: the latter under the command of Ibrahim al Nashmi, supported by the redoubtable Faisal al Duwish, with his ferocious Ikhwan, to whose tender mercies the citizens of the Prophet's city refused to surrender themselves on any terms whatsoever, though they did invite Ibn Sa'ud to send a representative of his own to receive their submission and

guarantee them against Ikhwan atrocities. Muhammad had therefore no sooner appeared before Madina than it surrendered on December 5th, while Faisal al Duwish and his fanatics were redeployed for mopping-up operations in northern Hijaz. With nothing now left to him but the periphery of Jidda, King 'Ali yielded to the inevitable on the advice of his principal officials; and the British Agency was asked to use its good offices to secure his own departure in peace and the orderly occupation of the town. Such arrangements were easily made; and, after the departure of 'Ali by sea for 'Iraq, Ibn Sa'ud entered Jidda on December 23rd: to find himself for the first time in diplomatic contact with a number of Powers, great and small, and to face a whole battery of awkward problems inherited by him, as conqueror of the holy land, from the régime of the Capitulations. These had been designed in former times for the protection of the infidel in Muslim lands, but had gradually come to be regarded as excuses for infidel interference in the affairs of Muslim governments. Ibn Sa'ud made it clear from the beginning that he would tolerate no criticism of or interference with God's law on earth. He had also however to deal with the public opinion of many Muslim countries as to how the holy land should thereafter be administered; but he had little difficulty in disposing of the self-appointed missions emanating therefrom by promising that the coming pilgrimage would provide a suitable opportunity for the discussion of all matters of concern to the peoples of Islam, if their accredited representatives would meet him then in conference.

Having thus made clear his intention to put the safety and welfare of the holy land in the forefront of his policy, and his readiness to receive and consider any advice which might be tendered to him from any quarter to that end, he proceeded to an act of State, which fluttered the dovescots of the west and produced a somewhat disagreeable impression in certain Muslim countries, long accustomed to the rule of foreign Powers and wholly wedded to alien culture, while retaining their quite genuine allegiance to Islam as interpreted by themselves. On Friday, January 8th, 1926, in the Great Mosque of Mecca after the congregational prayers, Ibn Sa'ud was proclaimed King of the Hijaz with all the traditional ceremony prescribed by Islamic precedent. It was at once an act of faith and a challenge to the world: to be made good in due course, without deviation from

the principle on which it was based, to the glory of God, of whose sustaining hand he was ever conscious amid all the vicissitudes of good and evil fortune, which in the long years to come were to lead his people, under his guidance, out of the wilderness into a promised land flowing with milk and honey. The great fight, of four and twenty years almost to the day, was over; and a greater span, by nearly four years, yet lay before him to develop the fruits of victory for the benefit of generations yet unborn: generations which 'knew not Joseph', nor ever heard the war-cry of the Ikhwan.

Arabia Felix

THE fight was over. Ibn Sa'ud had reached the peak of his career. The Arabia over which he was to rule for nearly three more decades was united as never before: within the utmost limits practicable in the international circumstances of the time, and exceeding anything which any of his ancestors had effectively controlled. Within these limits he would not be challenged again; and the realm which he had carved out for himself with his sword and his faith would descend intact to his successor. The vital factor at the moment was his reputation for justice and resolution, which was seldom put to the test, and always vindicated when the rare need arose. For the first time in human memory Arabia had a single ruler whom all could, and did, respect.

At the age of forty-five he was in the prime of life, with a lifetime of achievement already behind him; but victory had refreshed him like a giant to run again. And again, as before, he would have to run alone: in the presence of more numerous and more critical spectators, and under very different conditions. By birth and breeding an aristocrat to the core with a firm belief in the divine right of kings and in their duty to rule, he was by temperament a democrat familiar enough with the processes of common consultation, which were an integral element of Arab life. And it was perhaps his personality which reconciled the two strains in his character in an easy assumption of leadership: the proper function of which he himself was often wont to interpret with a quotation from the Quran: 'Take counsel among yourselves, and if they agree with you, well and good; but if otherwise, then put your trust in God, and do that which you deem best.'

This method had served him well enough hitherto in situations demanding the exercise of that instinctive skill which is the prerogative of the expert. But his new status as an international figure was to confront him with problems of an unfamiliar type, for the tackling of which his past experience provided no guide,

while the burden he had taken up was obviously too heavy for any man to bear without help: particularly in regard to such technical matters as finance and economics. He himself was always conscious of his shortcomings, though he never shrank from his responsibilities: while his outstanding greatness and self-reliance were in themselves an obstacle to the recruitment of a competent team for the handling of the political and administrative affairs of the State. With half a dozen men of comparable virtue and ability to help him, Sa'udi Arabia, as the dual kingdom of the Hijaz and Najd was renamed some years later, might well have become a shining and unique example of human statecraft, combining the spiritual and temporal governance of men on the firm foundation of faith and justice, which it was certainly the king's intention to establish at all costs.

To achieve this the will of the people was as essential as the will of the monarch; and unfortunately the two qualities requisite in those who were to help him in his almost superhuman task were rarely found in combination. Of virtue at that time there was plenty and to spare in the hosts of Najd, who had risked their lives to achieve a spiritual ideal, and earnestly desired its application to the graceless lands they had conquered: but few among them had the administrative knowledge and experience needed for the development of the new situation in which conquest had landed them. Of ability also there was no lack, particularly among the king's new subjects of conquered Hijaz; but virtue had departed from them in the contaminating atmosphere of long years of Turkish rule, in the service of which many of the best of them had become adept in the corrupt practices which led to wealth and professional advancement. In any case Ibn Sa'ud was justly cautious in the employment of this category of available civil servants, whose loyalty to the new régime was by no means established beyond a peradventure. And in these circumstances he was forced to fall back on the only other source of recruitment available to him: at first on a strictly limited scale, though later in a surging flood which brooked no control.

He had quite rightly set his face from the beginning against the employment of non-Muslims in any official capacity, lest the experience of other Muslim lands might be repeated in his own: on the other hand he had made it clear that the Hijaz at least would always be regarded as a territory held in trust for all

Islam, and that all Muslims would be welcome to its hospitality, whether they came thither as pilgrims or to seek their livelihood: on the sole condition of their accepting the Islamic law as the dominating factor in their comings and goings on their lawful occasions. It was in this category therefore, of 'foreign' Arabs and other Muslim nationals, that he was compelled to seek the officials required for the proper administration of the country, which was at first divided into two more or less separate communities: Najd and the Hijaz, linked together only by his own sovereignty. And in neither could he, or would he, delegate anything of his own effective authority.

Such was the domestic setting in which Ibn Sa'ud found himself at the beginning of his reign in the Hijaz; and the manner in which he addressed himself to the problem of creating a basic administrative *cadre* is perhaps best illustrated by the remarkable fact that practically all the men he collected round him during the first two or three years after the occupation of the Hijaz, to deal with the activities of the various departments on his behalf, remained not only in his service, but roughly speaking in charge of the same departments, to the end of his life. If this does not necessarily prove an unerring instinct for the selection of the right men for the various functions of State, it certainly illustrates an important trait in his own character: a sort of mild xenophobia, whose symptoms were a lack of enthusiasm for strange society, easily disguised of course by his lavish hospitality and genuine friendliness, and a curious preference for having round him at all times, day in and day out, year in and year out, the same people, always the same people, whether members of the family, or officials, or boon-companions, or servants. It was only in their company that he could relax without reserve, and reveal the debonair spirit and the bonny soul which upheld him ever under the heavy burden of his crown. These people he could trust because he knew them intimately, their virtues and their faults; and these people he bound to himself and his service with a boundless generosity, ever increasing with the augmentation of his resources.

An exception to the general rule of long service was curiously enough one who had already served him longer than any of the rest: 'Abdullah al Damluji, originally of Mosul in 'Iraq, who had joined Ibn Sa'ud in 1915 in the capacity of his personal medical adviser. His knowledge of French had raised him to political

responsibilities *vis-à-vis* foreign visitors to the court of Riyadh; and after the occupation of the Hijaz he was appointed the king's personal representative at Jidda, until he became in his stride Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, when the king's second son Faisal was appointed Minister. But after a few years of trial in this post he was disposed of by the usual expedient of being given indefinite leave in 1930, and allowed to resign. His successor, Fuad Hamza, arrived as a refugee from Palestine in 1928, and proved a valuable recruit to the Sa'udi Foreign Office until his death in harness in 1951: a great loss to his adopted country. Incidentally he had during the war represented Sa'udi Arabia at Vichy, and later at Ankara, where he was followed as Minister by his brother Taufiq.

The outstanding member of Ibn Sa'ud's official team was unquestionably 'Abdullah Sulaiman, who became Minister of Finance in 1929, after a trial run in the post by Sharaf Ridha, a Sharif who had no reason to be loyal to the departed Sharifian dynasty. 'Abdullah had the advantage over his colleagues of being a Najdi by birth and an accountant by practical training; and his eldest brother had served as Ibn Sa'ud's principal private secretary for many years before his death. He himself had accompanied his master in much the same capacity during the Hijaz campaign, and was clearly marked out for important employment. Seemingly of delicate constitution, he was a man of wide vision, and never spared himself in the exacting task of manipulating the widow's cruse for the satisfaction of all demands made upon its never-failing contents. His courage was inexhaustible in his approach to manifold schemes of reconstruction and development: some of which inevitably went awry, while many of them produced lasting results of great benefit to the country, whose growing wealth he managed with Barmecide astuteness through a civil service of his own, with members of his own family in all the key posts. And finally, while he at all times seemed to enjoy the complete confidence of the king, he was the only member of the administration who habitually acted on his own initiative and authority, in the justifiable conviction that his acts would meet with His Majesty's approval.

Among other prominent members of the administration who have held office from those days to this are Hafidh Wahba and Yusuf Yasin: the former an Egyptian, who had experienced a period of detention at Malta in connection with the Alexandria

riots of the Zaghlul episode in 1919, and who, after a short period as Ibn Sa'ud's Director of Education, became his representative at the court of St James, first as Minister in 1930, and more recently as Ambassador, as he still is with all but a quarter century of diplomatic service behind him. Inevitably he has been the hardest worked of all the diplomatic representatives of Sa'udi Arabia, which he was called upon to visit very frequently for consultation with the king and Yusuf Yasin, who, as His Majesty's Political Secretary, recently promoted to the rank of Minister of State, has during all these years been the connecting link between his master and the extensive network of diplomatic posts spreading almost from China to Peru. By origin a Syrian of Latakiya, who became involved in his youth in the mandatory troubles of his country, he arrived in Arabia about 1923 and threw in his lot with the Wahhabi cause: soon winning the confidence of Ibn Sa'ud, and accompanying him in the Hijaz campaign, after which he was appointed editor of the official Mecca weekly, *Umm al Qura*,* whose contents he supervised as part of his more important functions as Political Secretary (unpaid). He has certainly been one of the outstanding men of Ibn Sa'ud's régime in more than one phase of its activities; and his work, often involving travels abroad for one purpose or another, has been ably seconded by his assistant Rushdi Mulhis, a refugee from Palestine, whose official duties have left him little time for the development of the literary and scholastic tastes, to which in all probability he would have preferred to devote his life if conditions had been normal.

Among others who have contributed largely to the development of Ibn Sa'ud's government, mention should certainly be made of Khalid al Qarqani, who abandoned his home in Libyan Tripoli on to its occupation by the Italians, and came to Jidda in the early days of the new régime in the Hijaz with a view to doing business: but was soon attracted to the personal service of the king in an advisory capacity, while retaining his Turkish nationality. He has been by no means the least effective member of the king's political and administrative entourage,

* This paper has continued without a break to the present day. Another paper, *al Bilad al Sa'udiya*, was started about a dozen years ago, first as a weekly, and recently as the only daily newspaper of the country. Both are published in Mecca, while Madina has for fifteen years had a weekly of its own, known as *al Madinat al Munawwara*. Riyadh and other districts have also quite recently started newspapers of their own.

while in these latter years his ability, mellowed by the passing years, seems to have acquired for him a recognised position of trust and leadership.

So much for the personnel side of the picture. It will have been noted that Ibn Sa'ud in the early stages of his reign had deliberately abstained from bringing his sons and other members of the royal family into anything like close contact with the work of administration. It is true that his two elder sons, Sa'ud and Faisal, had been appointed as his official deputies in Najd and the Hijaz respectively; and that Faisal, with his considerable experience of foreign travel and contact with the Governments of many European countries, had been made Minister for Foreign Affairs. Such appointments were natural and appropriate enough in view of the great responsibilities which in the ordinary course of things would fall upon them in due time: while it was always understood that their functions would be exercised subject to the king's own control in all matters of vital importance, especially when he was himself present in either of the territories concerned.

For the rest he was probably wise not to risk exposure of the royal family to criticism or censure by calling upon other members of it to bear responsibilities for which they were not fitted by experience or training. And it was characteristic of him that, as the years brought him increase of wealth and progeny, he was always warning his audiences, and by implication himself, that, in the words of the Quran: 'Verily your possessions and your children are your enemies.' The temptation to spoil both is a danger ever to be guarded against; and often enough, as he knew from experience, it is irresistible.

In the end, when a Council of Ministers was created all too late, to take over the burden from the strong shoulders now bowed down by age and long effort, the princes came into their own with a proportion of Cabinet posts which can surely have few precedents in any age or clime since the world began. And incidentally an interesting and attractive feature of the Sa'udi royal family is the order of precedence of its members within a range, not precisely defined in any ordinance, but well understood and scrupulously observed by all concerned. Age alone is the determining factor: sons, grandsons, and even great-grandsons sitting above their uncles or cousins of a senior generation if they happen to have been born before them. There appear to

be no exceptions to the rule, and even Sa'ud, after his proclamation as Crown Prince in 1933, continued to take precedence at court only on the age basis: an arrangement sometimes disconcerting to strangers when more senior members of the family, unknown to them, were present. Actually in the early Hijaz days all the sons and nephews of the king were relegated, as it were, to the back benches of the assembly when the king was present; and this arrangement was only gradually relaxed as its unsuitability became apparent with the coming of age of numerous princes, of whom there is perhaps one to every 5,000 souls of the Sa'udi Arabian population.

Meanwhile the only distinction enjoyed by Sa'ud, as prince consort or prince regent or successor to the throne, was the right to fly the flag at all times, and to have a military escort and armed attendants on the running boards of his car. And it was on him too that devolved, increasingly as the years advanced, the royal prerogative of presiding at State banquets and other formal functions: a duty which the king, always a poor trencherman, had hitherto performed punctiliously enough and with resignation, but without relish: perhaps because the delicious vic-tuals and simple table arrangements of the old régime had been supplanted gradually but inexorably with the passing years by the cuisine and table manners of the new world. In praising the past, whose splendid culture survived in the land of its birth through all the stresses and strains of many millennia into our own times, one must make allowances for the new generation, which has not known the labour and peril accompanying its development, and which has an unquestionable right to adopt the easier ways and ampler amenities of a very different dispensation: for itself and the countless generations yet to come. And the choice has been made: irrevocably, for there can be no going back to the things of the past, whose last great champion now rests from his labours.

One is tempted to forecast the probable trend of the future for the Arab lands, now in the flush of their renaissance, were it not folly to predict the workings of Providence, as the day-dreamer of *Eothen* would surely admit, could he but stand today, as he did but little more than a century ago, on the summit of Lebanon: '... I clung with my eyes to the dim steadfast line of the sea. . . . I had grown well used of late to the people and the scenes of forlorn Asia—well used to tombs and ruins, to silent

cities and deserted plains, to tranquil men, and women sadly veiled; and now that I saw the even plain of the sea, I leapt with an easy leap to its yonder shores, and saw all the kingdoms of the West in that fair path that could lead me from out of this silent land. . . . Behind me I left an old and decrepit world—religions dead and dying—calm tyrannies expiring in silence. . . .’ Where, where are all those western kingdoms now? and lo! the kingdoms of the east in serried ranks, hand in hand with new and vigorous republics; and the great cities of the desert and the sown, famous of old, and now reborn to be famous again. That is scarcely the picture which Kinglake expected his descendants to see today; and if he could predict with a measure of success an early extension of British imperialist activities to Egypt, he could scarcely foresee the substantial disintegration of the Empire itself within a century of his writing. Who then can say what another century may have in store for the Arab world, or the world at large? The end of ‘civilisation’ may be in sight: but it is more probable that, as once before, the custody of civilisation may be transferred to the countries of the east, whence it sprang in times long gone before.

To return from this general survey of factors, forming, as it were, the framework on which the pattern of the future was to be weaved, to the proclamation of Ibn Sa‘ud as King of the Hijaz: world reaction to this quite unforeseen development was generally less favourable in the Muslim countries than in the west, which was certainly not enthusiastic. But the tune was called by Russian policy which, still loyal to the anti-imperialist principles of the Bolshevik revolution, hastened to accord *de jure* recognition to the new régime in the holy land of Islam. Britain, France and Holland followed with similar recognition in rapid succession. Turkey, Belgium and Switzerland came next; and in 1929 Germany added herself to the recognising Powers.

In the latter year Persia, which had held aloof on account of popular resentment over the demolition of the tombs of saints in Mecca and Madina, opened negotiations, leading to eventual recognition. But Egypt declined to recognise Ibn Sa‘ud’s régime owing to some serious trouble between the Egyptian pilgrims and the Wahhabis during the pilgrimage of 1926, and the withdrawal of the *Mahmal* (‘holy carpet’) from Jidda in the following year, owing to Ibn Sa‘ud’s refusal to let it go to Mecca and ‘Arafat lest it might again be a cause of dissension. It was

not indeed till 1936 that diplomatic relations were restored between the two countries at the instance of Mustafa Nahas, the then Egyptian Prime Minister, after the death of King Fuad, which effectually put an end to the latter's groundless pretensions to the Califate. Since then the relations of the two countries have become ever closer and more cordial, to the great benefit of Sa'udi Arabia, which has long enjoyed the technological advice and assistance of its more advanced neighbour: *Amantium irae amoris integratio est!*

America, of course, was not at this time interested in Arabia; and the rather conspicuous absence of Italy from the ranks of recognising Powers is easily explained by her more than platonic interest in the Yaman, already marked down by Signor Mussolini's Government as a desirable tract for Italian colonisation. Indeed the failure of Sir Gilbert Clayton to follow up his very satisfactory negotiation of the Hadda and Bahra treaties with Ibn Sa'ud in 1925 with a settlement of many outstanding issues between Britain and the Imam Yahya in the following spring, when he visited San'a, virtually drove the Imam into the arms of Italy. And towards the end of 1926 Signor Gasparini, the Governor-General of Italian Eritrea, successfully concluded a treaty of commerce and friendship with the Yaman, in which the Imam Yahya was duly recognised as king of 'the independent sovereign State of the Yaman' within 'its existing territorial extent': a phrase which seemingly committed Italy to the recognition of territorial claims, which were actually or potentially in dispute between the Imam on the one hand and the Governments of Great Britain and Sa'udi Arabia on the other.

The months preceding the fall of Jidda had witnessed the visits of no fewer than three missions from abroad, intent on discussing with Ibn Sa'ud various matters of concern to the countries from which they emanated. That of Sir Gilbert Clayton, with its results, has already been reviewed. An official Persian mission was also allowed to pass through the Sharifian defence line to Mecca, where Ibn Sa'ud placed at its disposal all necessary facilities for ascertaining the damage done to offending tombs in Mecca by the Wahhabis; and it eventually accompanied the Amir Muhammad's army to Madina for the same purpose: Ibn Sa'ud having undertaken to rebuild according to the tenets of Islam any tomb which deserved such attention. The political result of the visit has already been recorded. But

perhaps the most embarrassing of the three missions was an unofficial one from India, representing the Califate Committee, which arrived at Jidda with every intention of condemning the actions of the Wahhabis on this and other grounds, and of pressing for the surrender of the administration of the holy land to a democratic commission representing all the Muslim countries. Ibn Sa'ud was patient with it until its attitude became intolerable; and was then constrained not only to ask it to leave the country, but to arrange for its transportation under escort to a ship bound for India.

He had meanwhile met all criticisms, from whatever quarter they came, by announcing: firstly that he could not divest himself of responsibility for establishing peace and security in the holy land, whose inhabitants, mainly the Badawin tribes, had for long years defied both the Turks and the Sharifian Government to the great detriment of the pilgrims; and secondly that he proposed to invite all elements interested in the future of the Hijaz to meet him in conference at Mecca after the coming pilgrimage during the early summer of 1926. The number of pilgrims from overseas, who attended the pilgrimage, was in itself sufficient to show that general confidence in the safety of the venture had been restored under his auspices. And the conference, when it took place, was allowed the widest latitude in discussing all relevant, and indeed irrelevant, matters: and in passing resolutions of unexceptionable religious orthodoxy. But on the main political question, which was never far below the surface of the debate, there could obviously be but one answer. Ibn Sa'ud intended to continue ruling the Hijaz in the interests of Islam as a whole, and was prepared to accept full responsibility for doing it properly. The conference broke up on that very clear understanding; and many of those who had attended it must have gone away disappointed. But the pilgrims at least, visiting the Hijaz as they did during the few years that remained before the economic slump of the early 'thirties, had no reason, and ever since have had no reason, to complain of the dangers and insecurity of the pilgrimage.

Moreover the measures taken under Ibn Sa'ud's personal direction to cater for the health of the pilgrims must be given some credit for the simple fact that during the twenty-seven pilgrimages which have since been celebrated not a single occurrence of epidemic disease has been recorded. And, apart from

that, Ibn Sa'ud's decision to allow the pilgrims an amenity hitherto sternly denied to them has added enormously to their comfort. The encouragement given by him to the introduction of motor transport has progressively revolutionised the conditions under which the pilgrimage is made annually by thousands of visitors from abroad. And today, with air transport added since the second world war to the available amenities, the visitation has ceased to be an arduous enterprise.

Even this astonishing transformation is not all that stands to the credit of the Sa'udi administration in its attention to the welfare of the pilgrims, who were wont in the early days to complain of the high fees collected from them by the Government, without making allowances for the fact that the provision made for their comfort and health inevitably cost a great deal of money. The fee was in fact no more than £5 per pilgrim, but that was in the days when the pound sterling and the pound gold were one and the same thing; and it is scarcely the fault of the Sa'udi Government that they have ceased to be that. The continued payment of fees in gold or its market equivalent certainly had the appearance, from the point of view of the pilgrims, of greatly increasing their burden; but that has happened all over the world. And, be that as it may, the pilgrims today have not even that grievance to ventilate: the pilgrim fees were abolished under the orders of the king as soon as Government resources from oil and other sources made the concession possible, and enabled the Government to bear the whole cost of the ever-increasing amenities (tarmac roads with several lines of traffic, for instance, from Mecca to 'Arafat) provided for the benefit of all persons making the pilgrimage.

Having disposed of the Islamic conference, Ibn Sa'ud sent his son, Faisal, with a small mission of good will to convey his thanks to the Governments of Britain, France and Holland for their recognition accorded to his new status. All matters of mutual interest were naturally discussed with the mission by the authorities of the three countries visited; but it had no particular political objective to advance. On its return to Arabia, however, the British Agent and Consul at Jidda, Mr S. R. Jordan, was authorised to open negotiations with Ibn Sa'ud, who was then at Madina, with a view to a comprehensive review and settlement of all outstanding matters of mutual interest.

It was obvious enough to all concerned that the old 1915

treaty of Qatif no longer represented the true relations between the two countries; and that a new treaty was now needed to provide British recognition of Ibn Sa'ud's complete sovereign independence, with all that that implied. He must be free to have relations with other Powers, and have the right to supply himself with arms and ammunition from any available source without restriction: while there could be no question of his recognising the old capitulatory régime, born under the Turks and continued with some modifications during the short Sharifian interregnum. But the British Government clung tenaciously to its old right of manumitting run-away slaves who might take sanctuary in its Consulate: while Ibn Sa'ud would not commit himself to formal recognition of the British mandates over 'Iraq, Palestine and Trans-Jordan unless the Ma'an-'Aqaba province of the Hijaz were retroceded to him. And both parties were definitely interested in the problem of the full restoration to operational status of the Hijaz Railway, which British efforts had done so much to destroy during the war. Incidentally this problem has been under desultory consideration from that day to this without the slightest prospect at any time of any practical solution being found, so far as the derelict section within the limits of Sa'udi territory is concerned. At first the mandatory Powers declined to redistribute the available locomotives and rolling-stock on a kilometrage or any other reasonable basis, while the successor Governments in Syria and Trans-Jordan, to say nothing of Palestine, and the Government of Sa'udi Arabia have not yet been able to arrive at a satisfactory agreement on the matter, which is now once more under consideration.

The talks between Ibn Sa'ud and the British envoy proved fruitless; and Ibn Sa'ud disengaged himself from further discussion of these matters in order to visit Riyadh, from which he had been absent for two years. It was probably high time that he should renew contact with his own people, the tribal Shaikhs and the 'Ulama in particular, who had doubtless been hearing rumours of what was happening in the Hijaz, and were evidently uneasy in their own minds lest the conquered Hijazis might be leading their conquerors captive. In a sense there was some ground for their suspicions. It is true that the Committee for the Commendation of Virtue and the Condemnation of Vice had been set to work from the first to cleanse and purify the Augean stables of the Hijaz, and that prostitution and kindred

practices had been virtually stamped out, or driven underground: while the open consumption of liquor and tobacco was too serious an offence to be risked by addicts under the eyes of the Committee, which was also of course interested in ensuring that everyone was punctual and punctilious in attendance at the prescribed prayers in the mosques.

On some of these issues there could of course at that time and in those circumstances be no compromise whatever; and there was none. But in the matter of tobacco the essential humanity of Ibn Sa'ud showed itself in connection with an order issued under his authority for the seizure and burning of all stocks of tobacco in the Hijaz. The merchants knew that no valid objection could be raised against such an order, but they decided to throw themselves on the king's mercy, pleading that they would be ruined if the order were enforced. Ibn Sa'ud was profoundly shocked to hear from them that the value of existing stocks of the wicked weed was something like £100,000; and he was not prepared to inflict that loss on his wretched suitors, to whom accordingly he allowed a reasonable time to dispose of their holdings discreetly and without offence, on the understanding that no more of the stuff should be imported. The delay in the execution of the sentence was sufficient to bring other considerations into play; and the enormous revenues derivable from tobacco led to the well-founded conclusion that, disgusting as the habit of smoking might be, it was not expressly forbidden as one of the deadly sins by the sacred law, as it was obviously unknown to man until long after the promulgation of that law. And ever since then it has provided a substantial contribution to the revenues of the Wahhabi State.

There were also other points on which orthodox Wahhabi opinion was inclined to challenge the new look of things. The motor-car itself, for all its obvious advantages, was regarded askance as an invention of the infidel, if not of the devil; and many years later, when motor vehicles had established themselves as far better commercial carriers than the camel and were being widely used, the first lorry to enter the fanatical town of Haura was burned publicly in the market-place, while its driver nearly shared its fate. As for aeroplanes, which came much later, orthodox opinion regarded those who flew in them as flying in the face of Providence: though in due course even the highest prelates of the land found them convenient enough for

rapid travel between Riyadh and Mecca, and even to Egypt and Syria; while one of the most distinguished of the ecclesiastics of Riyadh, having recently arranged to visit Cairo by air, insisted on and was duly allowed by the Egyptian Government exemption from the obligation of having a photograph of himself on his passport!

But the particular concern of the orthodox folk, who hastened to greet their sovereign on his arrival from Madina on this occasion was, of all things, the telephone, of which they had doubtless heard accounts from those who had been to Mecca since the occupation. Their objections were apparently overcome by an invitation to try the instrument themselves, when, lo and behold! they heard the familiar voice of an invisible friend reciting a passage from the Quran. But it does strike one as strange that folk, who had been accustomed all their lives to extend the range of their vision by the use of foreign binoculars, should have been so shocked at the idea of using a simple contraption for long-range hearing. Gramophones and cinemas of course remained taboo, their importation into the country being still illegal; but time has softened many such asperities, and the number of 'boxes' and projectors in private hands must now be legion. Wireless, curiously enough, first made its appearance in the country over defences already irreparably breached by other novelties; and Ibn Sa'ud himself, always avid to have the latest news from the uttermost parts of the world, was a powerful patron of the new device; and in 1931 he established a whole network of internal wireless stations in his territories to bring him instant news of all happenings whatsoever: it might be the occurrence of rain here, or a murder there, or the death of some man of note, or even the birth of some grandson.

His ordeal at Riyadh was not a severe one; and if he did hear some candid criticisms of the innovations inherited from the Hijaz and the stranger within his gate, his skill in handling a Najdi audience, and indeed his eloquence (for he sometimes rose to great heights of oratory when the occasion demanded it) left little doubt that his policy would be endorsed by his genuinely anxious interlocutors. And the main result of his visit to Riyadh was that, with his father taking the lead in the matter, he was requested, and graciously agreed, to assume the title of King of Najd in order to raise his homeland to the same status as that of the conquered Hijaz, whither he now returned

rejoicing, to proclaim himself King of the Hijaz and Najd and its Dependencies.

The British Government now made another bid to settle outstanding problems with Ibn Sa'ud, and once more nominated Sir Gilbert Clayton to conduct the negotiations. These talks proceeded smoothly enough, and on May 20th, 1927, the treaty of Jidda was duly signed: instruments of ratification being exchanged on September 17th. This treaty, which was to last for seven years in the first instance, annulled the 1915 agreement *in toto*, recognised 'the complete and absolute independence of the dominions' of the king, who undertook to facilitate the pilgrimage for British Muslim subjects, and to respect all British treaties with the Persian Gulf principalities, and also to co-operate in the suppression of the slave trade.

This development was very satisfactory to all concerned. But scarcely had the ratifications of the treaty been exchanged when an incident occurred on the distant 'Iraq border, which was to cloud the relations between the two countries for some years to come. The general effect of the treaty of Muhammara of 1921, read with the protocol of 'Uqair of the following year, had been to couple the fixing of a definite frontier line between 'Iraq and the Wahhabi State with an understanding that no forts or other military installations should be set up by either side in the neighbourhood of the border. Nevertheless, about the time of the negotiations for the treaty of Jidda, Sir Henry Dobbs, the High Commissioner in 'Iraq, had sanctioned a scheme for the building of a series of forts along the 'Iraq-Najd frontier; and a working-party had now gone out to the wells of Busaiya to start on the construction of a fort near by, when a body of Mutair Badawin appeared on the scene, and massacred those who were engaged on the project. The tribes on the Najd side of the border had been assured at the time of the treaties in question by Ibn Sa'ud that their grazing rights on both sides of the frontier had been fully protected by a mutual prohibition of the construction of any buildings on or near the frontier wells; but they had clearly erred in taking the law into their own hands in such drastic fashion. And now it was the Royal Air Force which exceeded the rights of an aggrieved party in pursuing the offending Badawin across the frontier, and bombing their concentrations and camps, wherever found. The border went up in flames; and for about two months there was war, in fact though not in

name, between the two States which had so recently ratified a seven-years' treaty of friendship. The Najd tribes countered the British bombing by raiding into 'Iraq and Kuwait territory, killing and plundering as they went: while questions asked in the House of Commons about the totally unjustifiable bombing of Sa'udi territory produced the quite untrue answer, by the Colonial Secretary, that Ibn Sa'ud had admitted that he had lost control of his own subjects. What he had said was that, if the British authorities persisted in their aggression against his territory, he would not be responsible for the consequences.

By this time the king had returned to Riyadh, to be in close touch with all developments of the situation; and it was he who proposed to the British Government the stoppage of all military activities on both sides, and the transference of the dispute to the council-chamber. This was agreed to; and once more Sir Gilbert Clayton visited Jidda to confer with Ibn Sa'ud: his arrival actually coinciding with a breach of the truce by an aerial attack on the Badawin at the Hazil wells by some British planes, one of which made a forced landing in the area, and was burned after its occupants had been rescued by another machine. Clayton, who was now commissioned to deal comprehensively with all problems affecting the relations of Sa'udi Arabia with her neighbours, 'Iraq and Trans-Jordan, was accompanied by Colonel K. Cornwallis and Major J. B. Glubb, and also by Mr George Antonius. But the approaching pilgrimage (towards the end of May 1928) left him little time for the completion of his task; and it soon became obvious that, while agreement was not difficult of achievement on a variety of minor issues, the settlement of the Busaiya fort dispute to the satisfaction of Ibn Sa'ud was a *sine qua non* condition of any agreement at all. No progress having been made on this point within the available time, it was agreed to adjourn the talks till after the pilgrimage to enable Clayton to return to London for consultations with his Government. He returned to Jidda in August for a short and fruitless meeting with the king, who met the British Government's inability to agree to the demolition of the offending forts with a refusal to agree to anything at all. Clayton returned home to report the failure of his mission, while Ibn Sa'ud, now enjoying the greater mobility of a fleet of motor-cars, hastened back to Najd to deal with a hopelessly paradoxical situation.

He was at one with his subjects in condemning the attitude

of the British Government; and his subjects, whose fanaticism had been fanned into flame by infidel insults and injuries, were ready to fight to the death for his cause. But he knew better than they that only disaster could come of war with 'Iraq in the circumstances of the time; and he had already made up his mind that there should be no such war at any cost. He also knew that the desert was in ferment to the point of challenging his policy of accommodation with the infidel, and of asserting its right to defend the faith against its enemies. The Ikhwan leaders of this movement were Faisal al Duwish of the Mutair and Sultan ibn Bijad of the 'Ataiba, the chiefs of Artawiya and Ghatghat respectively, who could count on support against any constituted authority from the 'Ajman tribe, and its leader Dhaidan ibn Hithlain, and from a Ruwala Ikhwan group under Farhan ibn Mashhur. To deal with the matter by the traditional method of consultation, Ibn Sa'ud convened a conference at Riyadh, which was not however attended by the principal 'rebel' chiefs in person, though they did send their sons or other relatives to represent them. Many of the innovations, regarded askance by orthodox Wahhabism, were again passed in review; and the principal prelates, conscious of their grave responsibility before their God and their king, gave general support to the latter on all the main issues raised during the proceedings. And, in particular, his policy of peace and friendship with all his neighbours received the endorsement of the conference. He could now proceed with a clear conscience on the basis of decisions arrived at by the democratic methods of the desert.

The leaders of the opposition now came out in open rebellion against their king, who immediately mobilised his forces to take up their challenge. The operations followed the usual desultory course of Badawin warfare, interspersed with frequent parleys, and dragged on for about four months of the spring of 1929, involving the State treasury in an expenditure of about £40,000. The rebel leaders rejected the king's demand for unconditional surrender for trial before the religious courts, which could only have found them guilty of high treason and sentenced them to death, though they could then have appealed to the king's mercy, which would almost certainly have been granted. Perhaps they were conscious of having already gone too far to take that risk; and the fight was now on with a vengeance. The

rebel forces were concentrated in entrenched positions on the plain of Sibila between Zilfi and Artawiya, on which the royalist army, divided into a number of columns, each commanded by a brother or son of the king, converged slowly but in formidable array. A final appeal for surrender being rejected, Ibn Sa'ud gave the order to attack. The rebel fire was not returned until the troops were within charging distance; and the end came swiftly and decisively. In the hand-to-hand fighting the rebels were hopelessly outnumbered, and killed by hundreds: Faisal's son Bandar being among the dead, while Faisal himself was carried off to Artawiya, apparently mortally wounded. Sultan ibn Bijad fled from the field, but surrendered, to languish in the dungeon of Riyadh till his death not long afterwards; and the town of Ghatghat, famous in the annals of the Ikhwan, was razed to the ground by the king's younger brother, 'Abdullah, and has remained an empty ruin to this day. The king now marched on Artawiya to demand the surrender of Faisal al Duwish, and rejected the appeal of his women-folk that he should be allowed to die in peace. He was accordingly brought before him on a stretcher: to receive a free pardon from the chief whom he had served so long and so doughtily in the cause of God, and in the end betrayed. Now at least he could be left to die in peace among his own folk.

The battle of Sibila was fought in March 1929; and Ibn Sa'ud hastened back to the Hijaz for another pilgrimage, after which his personal attention would be required for the disposal of numerous administrative problems. But his sojourn in Mecca was curtailed by an unexpected development. Faisal al Duwish did not die after all; and no sooner had he been healed of his wounds than he began planning another attack on the 'Iraq frontier, where the question of the forts still remained unsettled, though Ibn Sa'ud had suggested its reference to arbitration. The news of Faisal's activities necessitated an immediate return to Najd; and in July the king was back at Riyadh with a fleet of some 200 motor vehicles. Incidentally, during his short stay in the Hijaz, he had arranged for the purchase of four D.H.9 aeroplanes, and for the engagement of a number of British pilots to fly them, while considerable progress had also been made with a scheme envisaging a network of wireless stations to link up the principal centres of his vast but sparsely populated realm with his own headquarters, wherever they might be. The

contract for this enterprise did not actually materialise till about the end of 1930, when it was entrusted to the Marconi Company; but the aeroplanes duly arrived on the Hasa coast before the end of the year (1929), though they were not actually available, or needed, for use against the rebel tribesmen.

At the time of the king's arrival at his capital the centre of gravity of the rebellion had shifted to al Ahsa, where the 'Ajman tribe was giving the governor, 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi, some trouble, while Faisal al Duwish was gathering his clans for an attack on the 'Iraq frontiers. The activities of the 'Ajman were being kept under observation by the governor's son Fahd, who had a small force at his disposal to intercept raids against Kuwait or 'Iraq territory. The 'Ajman chief, Dhaidan ibn Hithlain, had visited Fahd to assure him of the innocence of his intentions, and had been detained temporarily as a precautionary measure, while a messenger was sent to inform his followers that all was well with him. Unfortunately the messenger missed the way; and the tribesmen, puzzled at the tarrying of their chief, marched on Fahd's camp to ascertain the cause. Their appearance in strength alarmed Fahd, who promptly had his guest killed. This foolish act enraged the loyal elements of the tribe, who had hitherto been serving with him, and they deserted in a body to their kinsmen, who immediately opened fire on the camp. Fahd himself was killed by a stray bullet; and vengeance had been visited on the actual perpetrator of the crime. In ordinary circumstances this might have been sufficient to close the incident; but the temper of the desert had been so soured by the Sibila episode that the son and successor of the murdered chief, Naif ibn Hithlain, had no difficulty in persuading his tribesmen to throw in their lot with Faisal al Duwish in the second stage of his rebellion. Meanwhile 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi had been so affected by the death of his eldest son, that Ibn Sa'ud was constrained to send his son and heir, the Amir Sa'ud, to assume temporary control of the province in his nominal capacity as commander of the punitive expedition, sent to deal with the 'Ajman.

The rebel confederates adopted the tactic of indiscriminate raiding into the territories of 'Iraq and Kuwait, in both of which they received help and encouragement from elements ill-disposed towards Ibn Sa'ud, and anxious to cause him any embarrassment possible in the circumstances. The latter was

never faced at this time with anything like the organised revolt which he had had to meet earlier in the year; and it was not his territory or his nationals which were the objective of the rebel operations. But he was continually under the harassing obligation of watching for and forestalling their attacks on his neighbours and, indeed, 'enemies'. He was however equal to the occasion: combing the desert in ever narrowing circles, and dealing faithfully with any forces which came within his reach. The biggest operation of this series was provided by an encounter with 'Abdul-'Aziz, the eldest son of Faisal al Duwish, and his raiding party of some 700 men, returning with their booty from a profitable attack on a Badawin camp near the Hazil wells. 'Abdul-'Aziz himself and practically the whole of his gang were killed in a skilfully placed ambush; and Faisal, having now lost two sons, was deeply affected, though he never faltered in his efforts to make good his desperate challenge. A stiff engagement was shortly afterwards fought at the Wafra wells; but again Faisal and his army of Mutair and 'Ajman suffered a decisive defeat, and fled to the neighbourhood of the frontier, intending to seek refuge beyond it with the infidel rather than bend the knee to Ibn Sa'ud.

The king now took the field in person to prevent this undesirable *dénouement*; and appealed to the British authorities to deny such asylum to the rebels, who were already receiving provisions from Kuwait to enable them to sustain their movement. The desired guarantee was forthcoming, and the position of Duwish and his friends became hopeless. Ibn Sa'ud attacked their last concentration in Sha'ib al 'Auja near Riqai in the Batin valley, where the frontiers of Najd, 'Iraq and Kuwait meet. Again they were decisively defeated; but the British guarantee, already mentioned, broke down. And the four ring-leaders of the rebellion—Faisal al Duwish, Naif ibn Hithlain, Ibn Lami of the Mutair and Ibn Mashhur of the Ruwala—made good their escape into 'Iraq, where they were disarmed and detained by the British authorities pending discussion of their disposal in response to the vigorous protest of Ibn Sa'ud, and his demand for their extradition. King Faisal was not disposed to surrender refugees who, by Arab custom, were entitled to the protection of the guest-rite; but the British authorities were in the embarrassing position of having failed to make good a solemn guarantee. For some weeks the situation looked ex-

tremely serious; but in the end an arrangement was arrived at, under which the rebel ring-leaders would surrender unconditionally on the understanding that Ibn Sa'ud had no intention of exacting the supreme penalty for their treason. Faisal al Duwish and his friends were accordingly flown to a rendezvous in the Dibdiba desert for delivery into the hands of their sovereign; and in due course they found themselves in the dungeon of Riyadh, where Faisal ended his days some months later.

By the end of January 1930 the trouble was over; and the occasion was fittingly celebrated by a meeting between the two kings who had been so perilously near to being at war with each other. Ibn Sa'ud and Faisal met each other for the first time in their lives on board a British sloop in the neutral waters of the Persian Gulf, as the guests of Sir Francis Humphrys, the British High Commissioner for 'Iraq: who had shortly before succeeded Sir Gilbert Clayton in that post on the latter's sudden death only a few months after he had succeeded Sir Henry Dobbs at Baghdad. In appearance, at any rate, if not in fact, the Duwish rebellion had served indirectly to reconcile the rival dynasties of Arabia, which have at least respected each other's territories ever since, and composed all frontier incidents in debate rather than in arms. But it would be idle to assume that the Sharifian leaders of that generation were ever reconciled to the irrevocable loss of their Meccan homeland; and, when King Faisal of 'Iraq died in 1933, it was his elder brother 'Abdullah, then Amir and later King of Trans-Jordan, who took up the cudgels as the champion of the family cause. The latter's death, by assassination, in 1951 removed the last obstacle to the establishment of normal relations between the three countries concerned, while in the Hijaz a new generation had grown up which knew not the Sharifian Joseph, and was too busy basking in the sun of Sa'udi affluence to give a thought to the lean years of their fathers.

The friendly, though formal, talks of the two Arab kings on board H.M.S. *Lupin* provided the basis of a treaty of friendship and good-neighbourliness between their two countries, which was initialled by their respective representatives at Baghdad on March 10th, 1930: by which time Ibn Sa'ud was back in the Hijaz for the pilgrimage, after which he was at last free to devote the whole of his attention to the many local and international problems, which had had to be laid aside while he was dealing with the more urgent matter of internal security. The

manner in which he had tackled the thoroughly distasteful task of bringing his own folk to heel on an issue, on whose merits he was substantially in accord with them, had confirmed his already high reputation both for desert-craft and for statesmanship. For thirty years he had been more or less continuously in the field against his enemies, whom he had reduced to submission, one by one, in an ever-mounting crescendo of victory; but the last of his battles, paradoxically enough, had had to be fought against his friends, for one purpose, and one purpose only: to show them, and the world at large, that he was, and intended to remain, master in his own house. He never took the field again in person: not that there would be no more battles to fight (these could now be left to the rising generation, already blooded in military operations of the past decade), but because the victories of peace now beckoned imperiously from the unfamiliar terrain of a new world.

The battle of Sibila marked the end of an epoch. Sa'udi Arabia (not so named until 1934) had virtually assumed its final shape as the result of constant war upon the infidel: and henceforth the infidel would be a valued ally in the common cause of progress. Hitherto the killing of infidels in the way of God had been regarded as the supreme virtue; but Faisal al Duwish had been taught at Sibila that that virtue must not be practised without the permission of higher authority; and henceforth its practice would be strictly forbidden. The sting had been taken out of the Ikhwan movement which had played so prominent a part in the creation of the new régime, and could now serve no further useful purpose. Slowly at first, but with ever developing momentum, it sank into oblivion: as the processes of assimilation kneaded the heterogeneous elements of the Sa'udi realm into a secular community, based as a matter of course on the faith and culture of Islam, but less conscious than before of the Almighty's constant interest in the daily activities of His creatures. Ibn Sa'ud's creation of the Ikhwan movement in 1912, on original lines of his own devising, was a master-stroke of genius: only equalled by his courageous liquidation of the organisation eighteen years later, when it could be nothing but an obstacle to the consolidation of a position which he had built up so patiently and laboriously. The Frankenstein of his own creation would surely have destroyed him, if he had not taken the initiative of destroying it himself.

In 1929 the Russian Government was again first in the field to raise the status of its diplomatic representation at Jidda from that of Consulate-General to that of a Legation, with the already well-tried Karim Khan Hakimoff as its first Minister. The British Government followed with similar action shortly afterwards, in spite of the tension then obtaining on the 'Iraq frontier; and Sir Andrew Ryan, nominated to be the first British Minister, duly arrived at Jidda to assume office early in May. Ibn Sa'ud had thus no reason to be displeased with the figure he was beginning to cut in the international sphere, as the diplomatic corps grew in numbers and importance amid the limited amenities of Jidda, to which the representatives of all foreign States were confined. But the king's sense of a very personal responsibility for the conduct of his relations with foreign Powers, coupled with a very natural aversion to spending more time than was absolutely necessary at Jidda, made the position of the foreign representatives somewhat difficult; and there was some substance behind Sir Andrew Ryan's witticism that all the Powers were represented there except Sa'udi Arabia. *Ad hoc* arrangements were of course made from time to time to keep in touch with foreign envoys when there were matters of mutual concern to discuss; but it was not till many years later that something in the shape of a Foreign Office was established at Jidda, with a permanent official of subordinate status to deal with matters of diplomatic routine. The Amir Faisal, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, visited Jidda at frequent intervals to deal with more important matters on behalf of his father, while the king was available in person on the occasion of his visits to the port, generally at rare intervals. Thus during the early period the maintenance of diplomatic contact fell mostly on the shoulders of 'Abdullah Damluji and Fuad Hamza.

It was perhaps unfortunate for Ibn Sa'ud that the completion of the somewhat make-shift foundations of his new régime should have coincided with the beginning of a period of lean years, resulting from a world-wide economic recession whose effects were felt in Arabia in the shape of a drastic and disastrous decrease in the numbers of overseas pilgrims visiting Mecca. Ever since the occupation of the Hijaz the attendance of pilgrims had been very satisfactory, even on one occasion reaching a record: and the Government had profited accordingly. The meagre revenues of the old days had now swollen into millions, and the

millions had been none too much in comparison with the requirements of the State. But now the golden flood had suddenly ceased, with the prospect of long years of drought to come, and no reserves from the years of plenty to support a scale of expenditure, far beyond the real needs of the country but now difficult to reduce without discomfort. The process was gradual but cumulative; and 'Abdullah Sulaiman, now Minister of Finance and destined to remain so for the next quarter of a century, had to exercise all his considerable skill and ingenuity in maintaining the high level of expenditure already reached out of the greatly reduced resources of the country. How he got his quart out of a pint bottle is a mystery which belongs to the realm of romance rather than of serious history.

Part of the new burden inevitably fell on government employees of the lowest salaried classes, whose small contributions to what was in effect a forced loan added up to a considerable monthly sum. At one time their salaries were as much as six or eight months in arrears of payment: especially in the outlying provinces, where the officials were forced to pass part of their own plight on to the local shopkeepers and merchants by purchasing the necessities of life on credit, and promising to pay when they were paid themselves. So the ripples of economic distress spread in widening circles through the whole country; and the pressure on the poor was certainly not the most attractive feature of the financial administration at this period. But the rich were not forgotten as potential contributors to the needs of the State: after all much of the money owed to them by the Government on account of contracts and bulk purchases represented a handsome profit on their outlay. So payment of debts were delayed or staggered until the absolute limit of credit was reached. And there was then no alternative to the proclamation of a moratorium on the payment of all existing obligations, in order that the Government might have some funds in hand for the purchase of urgent necessities, without having recourse to the distasteful process of cutting down its scale of expenditure. It may be added that the moratorium arrangements, envisaging the liquidation of all existing debts with interest at five per cent over a period of years, were on the whole honoured punctually.

The developments briefly sketched in the preceding paragraph were naturally spread over several years from 1930

onwards. Meanwhile Ibn Sa'ud, having disposed of the pilgrimage in May, had transferred his headquarters from Mecca to Taif for the summer months; and was thus able for the first time since his assumption of the crown of the Hijaz to devote himself at leisure to the consideration and solution of the many issues of domestic and foreign policy which had accumulated during his absence. At intervals he was able to relax completely during excursions into the vast Rakba desert, where he would set up his camp for several days at a time, as a base of operations for motorised assaults on the gazelles of the plain, whose numbers were systematically reduced at the rate of 200 or 300 head a day: with disastrous effects on the country's fauna. From those days to these the Sa'udi Government has never shown any sense of responsibility for the conservation of the wild life of the country; and no game laws appear among the very numerous royal rescripts of the past quarter of a century: nor, for that matter, any decrees for the preservation or investigation of the many important archaeological sites scattered through the length and breadth of an ancient land. Apart indeed from the grant of the king's permission in 1951 for a private archaeological reconnaissance of his southern provinces by Professor G. Ryckmans of Louvain and a small party of Belgian experts, the serious study of the far past which led up to the birth of Sa'udi Arabia seems to have been regarded as unworthy of a practical and forward-looking people. Such contributions to our knowledge of the ancient past of Arabia as have been made in recent times have been the incidental, and accidental, results of foreign private enterprise, primarily directed to other, and more practical, ends.

The king's sojourn at Taif on this occasion, repeated four years later after the pilgrimage of 1934, contributed in many important respects to the laying of the foundations on which the future structure of the kingdom was to be built. One of his main preoccupations was the improvement of the communications of the realm; and by the end of the year a contract had been signed with the Marconi Company for the supply and installation of two large 5-kilowatt wireless stations at Mecca and Riyadh respectively, together with a dozen $\frac{1}{2}$ -kilowatt sets for various provincial capitals and, last but not least, four mobile $\frac{1}{2}$ -kilowatt sets to accompany the king and his principal lieutenants on their travels. By the spring of 1932 this great network of wireless com-

munications was actually in being; and there can be no question of the very important part it has played ever since in the king's control and direction of the affairs of his realm. It has of course been greatly expanded and developed since those days; and Sa'udi Arabia compares favourably today, in the matter of wireless development, with any of its neighbours of the Middle East, to say nothing of many European countries. The king has long enjoyed the advantages of a long-distance wireless telephone; and a contract was recently signed with a German firm for the installation of an imposing network of such amenities to link all important centres with the uttermost parts of the earth. For several years also a broadcasting station has been operating at Jidda, with a link connecting Mecca and the main pilgrimage localities with its transmitters; while a wider scheme is now under consideration for extending its scope of operations to cover all Islamic lands. Sa'udi Arabia has also a number of princely and other members in the field of amateur wireless enthusiasts. And such matters as the progressive improvement of telegraph and telephone land-lines in areas where they are suitable, to say nothing of the proposed introduction for general use of an automatic telephone service in some areas, may be mentioned as minor tributes to the importance attached today in Arabia to modern communication amenities. It is already a long cry to the relatively recent days when the projection of the human voice was suspect as a device of the devil to disturb man's faith and peace.

In the medical field, whose impact on the general health of the pilgrims has already been noted, the king's personal interest and encouragement have progressively produced results which could scarcely have been imagined as being within the bounds of possibility when the Wahhabis inherited the meagre system developed by the Turks through centuries of futile struggle against disease and malnutrition. Ibn Sa'ud always prided himself on the possession of a certain natural flair for medicine and the kindred sciences: inherited from his father, who had a wide knowledge of Arab illnesses and their cures, largely derived from hearsay details of the prowess in this line of his own grandfather Turki ibn 'Abdullah. The tradition of native medicine in his own family in no way disposed Ibn Sa'ud to any prejudice against European methods, though it took some time for him to realise that what was sauce for the gander was also sauce for the

goose. But slowly and surely the barriers set up by the social seclusion of women were broken down to enable trained male practitioners to attend to the medical welfare of royal and other families, which thus benefited from expert diagnosis and treatment: not only by doctors of their own race, but also by European experts, including lady doctors, from many lands. The permanent medical staff has grown out of all recognition since those early years of the reign, staffed for the most part by Syrian and Egyptian personnel, though the most recent tendency has been in the direction of recruitment from Germany with very satisfactory results. The few antiquated hospitals available at that time for the rough and ready treatment of the sick have been modernised and reinforced by the provision by the Government and by private enterprise of numerous well-equipped and well-staffed institutions: some of them of a specialised character, and many of them good enough to bear comparison with the western models on which they have been designed. Some years ago Riyadh could boast of having one of the best X-ray installations in the Middle East, while such amenities are nowadays taken as a matter of course in most of the main centres of population. Sa'udi Arabia has been a veritable gold-mine for the medical profession; and perhaps the only matter for regret is that, in spite of the king's often-declared intention of extending the scope of medical aid to all parts of his realm, including the Badawin encampments, the progress made in this direction has been disappointing, owing to the perhaps natural tendency of the available personnel to prefer work in the larger urban centres, where there are rich opportunities of private practice, as well as reasonable social amenities for themselves and their families. The result has been that, with the great expansion of motor traffic on quite reasonable terms, the pressure of visitors from the provinces on the medical resources of the towns becomes increasingly heavy, while the availability of medical aid therein has encouraged vicarious settlement in and on the fringes of urban areas by Badawin and other elements.

The enormous increase of these urban populations during the past three decades, part of which can certainly be attributed to the established sense of security of life and property, has been one of the outstanding features of Ibn Sa'ud's reign. Towns like Riyadh and Jidda have at least quadrupled the number of their

inhabitants with something between 100,000 and 150,000 souls apiece. The 5,000 permanent inhabitants of Taïf have multiplied themselves tenfold; while the population of Madina, reduced from its normal 80,000 of Turkish times to less than 20,000 by the ravages of the first world war, has by now more than made good its deficit even without the restoration of the old railway facilities. Hufhuf has more than doubled its old-time population of 30,000, while the tiny fishing villages of Khubar and Dammam have grown into considerable towns as neighbours of industrial Dhahran, which was innocent of human habitations up to only twenty years ago. Mecca too, with its fairly constant population of about 100,000 in former times, must now have increased the number of its permanent inhabitants by at least fifty per cent. And it must be borne in mind that a considerable part of these increases of population has been attracted from countries beyond the limits of Sa'udi Arabia: notably from Egypt and the Levant, from Hadhramaut and the Yaman. Incidentally no attempt has yet been made to carry out a population census of Sa'udi Arabia; but a rough estimate of about six millions would seem to be a reasonable approximation to the facts.

Another serious problem, arising out of the increased populations of the urban areas, was that of water supply. Jidda, with some 30,000 souls, had hitherto depended on a sea-water condenser of inadequate capacity, producing drinking water at a very high cost, and on a series of masonry cisterns, designed to catch and store the floods descending across the coastal plain from the foot-hills, to say nothing of some brackish wells from which the poorer classes drew their requirements. Mecca and Madina had long had the aqueducts of 'Ain Zubaida and 'Ain al Zarqa respectively, as well as numerous wells, from which to supply the needs of their citizens and the visiting pilgrims.

In all these areas the water supply was liable to fall short of actual requirements, both in normal times and when the pilgrimage was above normal in size. So one of the king's most pressing cares at this period was to cater for a better supply in so far as it was possible to do so in the circumstances. A contract was accordingly placed at once for a new and much larger sea-water condenser for Jidda, while the 'Ain Zubaida aqueduct was traced back to its source at the foot of the mountains, and thoroughly cleared of all obstructive matter with satisfactory

results for the immediate future. Similar steps were taken at Madina, where the already established use of mechanical pumps was steadily expanded for agricultural purposes. The introduction of similar pumps to Riyadh and other large agricultural tracts was actively encouraged by the example of the king himself and many of the princes, including the Amir Sa'ud.

The fringe of the problem having thus been tackled in a tentative manner, the stage was set for the quite impressive developments of the following years. Mecca has been linked by a new pipe-line with the abundant spring of 'Ain Jadida at the head of Wadi Fatima to double the city's water supply, while other schemes of the kind are constantly under consideration to meet the expanding requirements of the people and the pilgrims. And, after the great flood of July 1950, the year of the king's golden jubilee, the problem of saving the city from such disastrous inundations in the future (the Haram was flooded to a depth of seven feet round the Ka'ba), steps were taken to dam Wadi Ibrahim, the main source of such danger, and Wadi al Zahir, whose floods threatened the suburb of al Shuhada and the main road to Jidda. These works were duly completed before the end of 1952, with the result that a great storm in November of the following year caused little or no damage in the area of the metropolis. In 1947 a group of springs round Jumum and Abu 'Arwa in the middle reaches of Wadi Fatima was also harnessed to a forty-mile pipe-line of large diameter to carry an excellent supply of drinking water to Jidda, but the steady expansion of the town, and the free use of the water for the watering of hitherto impossible gardens, soon made it evident that the supply originally considered more than sufficient for all needs for a long time to come would have to be augmented. And the doubling of the pipe-line has recently been completed.

At Riyadh the water problem, never hitherto serious except on occasions of prolonged drought over a series of years, has been exacerbated by the increasingly generous use of mechanical pumps, and even electrically driven pumps working at full pressure for twenty-four hours a day. The ample water-table, which made the oasis one of the richest in Arabia under the old conditions, has consequently been steadily lowered; and recourse has been had to the expedient of piping further supplies to the city from other sources in the Hanifa valley, north and

south of the capital, while a number of 5,000-gallon motor tankers are in constant service bringing water from various wells, far or near, to meet the needs of the people and their gardens. There is indeed plenty of water in Arabia; but it still remains a moot point, to be determined hereafter in the light of experience, whether the country's resources can indefinitely stand the strain which is being put on them at present, with but little prospect of its diminution.

Communications, medical amenities, water supply: these were but some, though admittedly the most important, of the problems which beset Ibn Sa'ud during those days of real peace at Taif. But it was obvious from the outset that they all presented a common factor of vital concern to a government which was genuinely desirous of catering for the welfare of the country and its visitors 'from every deep valley' of the earth. All such schemes would cost a great deal of money, while the bookings for the pilgrimage of 1931, especially from the hard-hit agricultural countries of the east, like Java, Malaya and India, suggested that the prospects of securing the necessary funds were extremely gloomy. The situation was perhaps a blessing in disguise. It was certainly a challenge to one who was no stranger to critical turns of fortune; and this was by no means the first time that he had found himself short of money, though the time-honoured method of replenishing his treasury at the expense of his enemies was no longer open to him for want of foes to spoil: except in one direction, whither he was genuinely loth to turn.

The Yaman, despite Italian interest in its fate and economic possibilities, and a vaguer British concern lest the Aden Protectorate might be called upon to share a frontier with the formidable Wahhabi State, was the only independent country in Arabia. All others beyond the frontiers of the Sa'udi realm were securely entrenched behind the impregnable barrier of British protection. The frontier between the Yaman and Ibn Sa'ud's territory was vague and undefined, with both sides claiming, and neither effectively occupying, the oasis of Najran and the former principality of the Sharifs of Abu 'Arish in southern 'Asir. And it was not Ibn Sa'ud who made the running for a more precise definition of the border of a no-man's land, which he was well content to leave to its somewhat lawless *de facto* independence: as indeed was the case with the northern oasis of Taima, which was unquestionably within his frontiers, but was left to

its anomalous independence under its baronial dynasty of Ibn Rumman until the notorious tyranny and assassination of its last baron forced the king to assume complete jurisdiction over the area in 1950.

As had been the case before in the dispute over the ownership of the Khurma oasis, with King Husain taking the military initiative with a view to creating a *fait accompli*, it was the Imam Yahya who sought a settlement of the matters at issue with the Wahhabi king by pushing his troops into the areas claimed by him with the support of elements in both, which preferred weak Zaidi control to any closer acquaintance with the strong arm of Ibn Sa'ud. The inevitable clash of frontier guards ensued at a village called 'Aru early in 1931. In the absence of reliable maps at that time it was not easy to determine in this case which side was the aggressor, though before long it became clear that the blame lay with the Wahhabi commander, who had unwittingly trespassed into Yaman territory.

But in the winter of 1931/2 a more serious incident occurred, when a Yamani force descended on and occupied Najran, where the property of unfriendly elements was destroyed. Their complaints forced Ibn Sa'ud to react vigorously; and during the spring of 1932 the Khurma chief, Khalid ibn Luwai, led a strong Ikhwan force to the scene, and had little difficulty in chasing the Yamani garrison out of the oasis and occupying it in the name of Ibn Sa'ud. The Najran issue was thus settled for good; but the mountainous country of southern 'Asir, now the scene of sporadic operations of an irregular character, lent itself to no such simple solution. Ibn Sa'ud accordingly sent a delegation to San'a to discuss the whole problem, with a view to arriving at a friendly solution of all outstanding issues between the two States. But the Imam was in no mood to recognise the Sa'udi claim; and a series of conferences, now in Sa'udi and now in Yamani territory, merely resulted in the prolongation of the negotiations into the spring of 1934. Ibn Sa'ud, having now lost all patience with his tenacious neighbour, delivered an ultimatum; and gave it substance by deploying his army for the invasion of the Yaman. The time limit for the Imam's acceptance of the king's conditions was fixed for April 5th, 1934; and the two columns of the Wahhabi army had instructions to cross the frontier on that date in the absence of orders to the contrary. A tremendous sand-storm, lasting three days, put the wireless

communications of the two commanders out of action; and the invasion of the Yaman began on the prescribed date.

The Amir Sa'ud, commanding the desert force based on Abha and Najran, was to strike through the mountains at the heart of upland Yaman; but his progress was slow owing to the difficult nature of the country, and the necessity of keeping pace with his supply columns, whose motor transport had on more than one occasion to be lowered by ropes down the face of sheer cliffs. Enemy resistance was no more than sporadic, even at the 'Iron Gate' covering the first considerable Yamani village of Baqim on the main route to San'a. The Tihama army, under the command of the Amir Faisal, encountered strong resistance on the valley line connecting the port of Maidi with the mountain stronghold of Haradh; but the vigour of the Wahhabi attack swept the enemy out of the way into the sea or towards the mountains. And the rest of the going was easy and swift: minor efforts to stay the army's progress being disposed of without serious difficulty, until first Luhaiya, and soon afterwards Hudaida itself were occupied in triumph. Even the outskirts of Taif, on the coast south of the latter, were reached; and Faisal was now in a strong position, either to continue his advance down the Tihama to the Aden frontier, or to strike into the mountains against San'a itself: or indeed to do both, as there was very little likelihood indeed of the demoralised forces of the Imam putting up any effective resistance, except perhaps a last-ditch stand before the capital.

The capture of Hudaida and the Tihama territory north of it had taken but three weeks, and a similar period would surely have been enough to add the Yaman to the Wahhabi realm. But Ibn Sa'ud had now developed habits of caution entirely out of keeping with the rest of his career; and Faisal received, with understandable dismay, his father's orders not to advance beyond Hudaida on any account, while Sa'ud also was bidden to remain where he was on what was soon to be the agreed Sa'udi frontier with the Yaman. Meanwhile British, Italian and French warships had hastened to Hudaida on various pretexts, though with little intention of congratulating the victorious Wahhabi commander on his prowess, or of making his task as the occupying authority any easier than it was. It was possibly this sudden manifestation of interest in the Yaman by the Great Powers, which deterred the king from a forward policy; but he could

reasonably insist on his armies remaining in occupation of the conquered territory pending the result of further negotiations, to be held at Taif under his own auspices. To enable such talks to begin forthwith, a truce was proclaimed, and the Imam Yahya nominated one of his outstanding officials, Saiyid 'Abdullah ibn al Wazir, to represent him.

The conference began without delay, while a so-called conciliation commission, representing various Arab States, and headed by Hashim Pasha al 'Atasi of Syria and Muhammad 'Ali 'Alluba Pasha of Egypt, visited Taif to watch the proceedings. In spite of a last-minute hitch, due to the reluctance of the Imam to confirm the agreement arrived at by the negotiating parties, the treaty of Taif was duly concluded; and the signal was given for the evacuation of all occupied territory: presumably on the payment of the agreed indemnity, said to have been £100,000 gold, to reimburse Ibn Sa'ud for the considerable expenses of the campaign.

Immediate arrangements were made to convene the joint boundary commission, which was to demarcate the frontier on the spot; and this task was duly completed in the following year, while the agreed line was mapped in 1936, since when there have been no frontier incidents incapable of settlement on the spot by the local authorities. In fact the only problem likely to arise between the parties was the possible construction of forts or other military installations within the forbidden limit of five kilometres from the border on either side. And the excellent relations established from the beginning between Muhammad ibn Madhi, the governor of Qizan, and Saiyid 'Abdullah ibn al Wazir, the signatory of the treaty on behalf of the Yaman, who was now appointed to the post of governor of the Tihama, with headquarters at Hudaida, soon obviated all possibility of misunderstanding. The causes of friction between the two countries had now been finally removed, and the treaty 'of friendship and brotherliness' lived up to its official title throughout the years that followed. It was not even ruffled by an unfortunate incident during the pilgrimage of the following year, when three Yamani pilgrims, who had carefully planned the deed, either out of religious bigotry or on behalf of some other person unknown, attempted the life of Ibn Sa'ud with knives during his circumambulation of the Ka'ba. The king was not seriously hurt, but the Amir Sa'ud who shielded him from the attack

received several wounds in his back and shoulders, which caused him some pain and inconvenience for a considerable period. The three assailants were immediately shot by the royal body-guard: and henceforth greater precautions were taken to protect the person of the sovereign from such vicarious risks.

Before returning to the situation confronting the king at Taif in 1930, it may be noted that the Amir Sa'ud had been formally appointed heir to the throne in 1933, and had duly received the homage of the people as their crown prince and future king. Thus all speculation about the succession was finally set at rest; and in the following year the king by decree changed the style and title of his realm, which was to be known henceforth as the 'Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia'. This development was not merely nominal, but reflected the decision of Ibn Sa'ud to bring all his territories under a homogeneous administrative system, especially in the field of financial and revenue control, which had hitherto been somewhat haphazard at the mercy of provincial governors, especially the more old-fashioned ones, like 'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi in al Ahsa, who resented any diminution of their authority by the concurrent activities of independent departmental officials: and resented still more the auditing of their accounts. The old order was however steadily yielding to the new and, while Ibn Sa'ud was considerate enough, and astute enough, to make allowances for old and well tried colleagues for the period of their incumbency—'Abdullah ibn Jiluwi died in 1938, to be succeeded by his eldest son Sa'ud—he was impressed by the arguments in favour of an uniform administrative system, and was determined to have it. One point strongly in favour of the more primitive system was that one seldom heard any serious allegations of corruption in connection with it: indeed the lives of provincial governors and their staffs were lived too publicly to admit of covert irregularities. And the system was simplicity itself, as a governor was responsible for collecting the revenues of his province and remitting a fixed proportion thereof to the central treasury; the balance was, as it were, his own salary and allowances, out of which he had to meet all the expenses of his administration. On the other hand the Turkish 'regular' administration, on which the new Sa'udi system was inevitably based in the early days, was notoriously inefficient and corrupt to the core; and it can scarcely be said that its major defects have been entirely eradicated in Arab hands.

Nevertheless, in view of the new rôle which Sa'udi Arabia would have to play in the international and economic spheres, it was inevitable that her administrative machinery should be adjusted to the needs of the modern world.

Furthermore it was obvious that, in order to provide the personnel to operate the new machinery, some modification of the educational system hitherto sufficient for the needs of the country would be essential. And the conflict between the old and the new systems would have to be fought out in the delicate borderland between religion and 'civilisation'. In its old connotation education was deemed to be concerned exclusively with the humanities, Arabian humanities of course: with religion at the centre, and avenues leading therefrom into every branch of intellectual speculation suggested by Quranic and Traditional texts, and developed in the voluminous literature of the exegetists, the historians, the geographers, the philosophers, the scientists, and so forth; and even anticipated by the pre-Islamic poets of the Arabian golden age. It cannot be doubted indeed for a moment that a person thoroughly versed in this vast mass of Arabic literary material, and fully understanding it and its implications, is entitled to be considered a highly educated man, even should he know no word of any other tongue, and have studied no works of foreign provenance even in translation, and have no technological knowledge whatever. Such a man is an expert in his own field, and is known to the Arabs as an *'Alim* (learned man) or *Talib 'Ilm* (seeker after knowledge); and the history of Najd over the past five centuries is dotted with the names of hundreds of such men, who have devoted the whole of their lives to learning and teaching and writing. On the other hand such folk are obviously not the stuff that civil services are made of; and the term 'civilisation' (*Tamaddun*) is commonly understood in Arabia to connote the secular materialist education of the west, whose function is to fit the young to take their places in the rough-and-tumble of modern life.

The need for modern education was certainly not felt in Sa'udi Arabia prior to the conquest of the Hijaz; and its desirability, or even legitimacy, was seriously questioned on the ground that it served to divert men's thoughts from the main business of life, namely preparation for the life to come. The occupation of the Hijaz however soon settled such doubts against the puritan view; and the urgent need of secular education was

readily admitted as a desirable sequel to a thorough grounding in the traditional subjects. Unfortunately it had for the time being to be sought abroad owing to the lack of suitable teaching facilities in Arabia; and too little thought was perhaps given to the moral effect of more 'enlightened' surroundings on boys thus freed from the apron-strings of their homeland. The Government encouraged the process by giving scholarships and bursaries to suitable candidates, enabling them to proceed to Egyptian and Syrian schools in the first place, and gradually farther afield to educational institutions in England, France, Germany and other countries, including America since the second world war.

The first Director of Education appointed by the king was Shaikh Hafidh Wahba, who made a sound beginning on these lines, as well as efforts to introduce the secular school system to the main centres of Arabia itself by providing school buildings and importing competent teachers from various Middle East countries. A school for the younger princes has been in existence for many years now in the king's palace at Riyadh, while the Amir, now king, Sa'ud has more recently set an admirable example by building near his own palace at Riyadh a model seminary roughly on the lines of an English public school, for the accommodation as boarders of his own sons and their servants and slaves of like age, and for their education by a select team of teachers from Egypt. The king's brother, Amir 'Abdullah, has done likewise for his family at Riyadh; and the Amir Faisal has sponsored a school at Ta'if for the education of his own sons and their contemporaries among the citizens of the town. There is no doubt that secular education is steadily on the increase in Sa'udi Arabia, while the number of Government scholarships held abroad seems at first to have averaged between 250 and 300 a year. In 1935 the number was 705, including 388 in Egypt, 259 in Syria, 46 in America, and in other countries including England. When Hafidh Wahba was required to take up the post of Sa'udi Minister in London in 1930, he was succeeded as Director of Education by Shaikh Tahir al Dabbagh, who held office for some years until the present incumbent, Shaikh Muhammad ibn Mani', an enlightened and outstanding member of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Mecca though of Najdi origin, was selected for the post. And the present state of secular education in the country may best be judged by the recently

published statistics for the year 1952/3. Village schools numbered 159, with 221 teachers and 10,301 pupils: an average of 65 pupils per school and 46 per class. Government elementary schools were 170 with 1,240 teachers and 30,846 pupils (181 pupils to each school and 25 per class). Eleven private elementary schools educated 3,568 boys through 149 teachers (an average of 324 boys a school and 24 per class). Government secondary schools numbered 11 with 150 teachers and 11,050 boys (averaging just over 1,000 boys per school and 73 per class): while there were 3 private secondary schools with a total of 438 boys and 26 teachers (averaging 146 a school and 17 per class). And finally various categories of religious schools accounted for 13 institutions with 100 teachers and nearly 1,100 pupils. There were also 8 institutions with 15 teachers preparing 263 candidates for the teaching profession, while 6 establishments with some 40 teachers provided night classes for the teaching of English. In addition, the various schools of the Arabian American Oil Company at Dhahran provided technological training for a considerable number of its employees, as well as general classes for book-keeping and clerical work for an average of 1,374 students a month. From the educational point of view the situation today presents an astonishing contrast with that of but twenty years ago.

But all these things have cost much money, and we must now return to the point where we left Ibn Sa'ud at Ta'if wondering how the meagre funds at his disposal could be made to suffice for the urgent needs of the moment let alone the schemes of development and reconstruction to which he was in honour committed, if he was to justify his occupation of the holy land in the eyes of critical neighbours. As we have seen, he had to wait four years for a relatively modest contribution to his resources by the Yaman war, which he had certainly done his best to avoid. But by then he had received another modest windfall, which was scarcely in his reckoning when he was reviewing his budget at Ta'if. The financial situation was then really desperate; and, in spite of his hunting expeditions and many other preoccupations, the king was patently depressed. At the same time there was among the people in general, and even in responsible circles, a good deal of wild talk, and some talk not so wild, about the immense mineral wealth of the country, only awaiting exploitation, or at least exploration: to which the basic

objection was that any such activity presupposed the cooperation of foreigners, who alone had the necessary experience and capital for such a purpose, though their presence would be resented by practically all sections of the population. And Ibn Sa'ud himself had had one experience of such a venture, whose rather ignominious failure scarcely predisposed him to court another. In 1923 he had, with the encouragement of Sir Percy Cox, granted a concession to the Eastern General Syndicate of London on very easy terms to explore the whole of his eastern territories for oil. The only stipulations made by him were that the Syndicate should pay an annual rent of £2,000 in advance, and pursue its investigations assiduously until oil was found or proved to be non-existent. Incidentally Sir Percy Cox would have preferred the Anglo-Persian Oil Company as the prospective concessionaire; but Ibn Sa'ud was shy of employing a semi-governmental concern in his territory for fear of possible political repercussions. The same Syndicate, represented in both cases by Major Frank Holmes, also obtained a similar concession for the Bahrain Islands, which it transferred to the Gulf Company of Mexico, which in turn for technical reasons disposed of it to the Standard Oil Company of California: apparently after an offer of it had been made to and refused by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. So far as Ibn Sa'ud was concerned, all he got out of his venture was £4,000, on account of two years' rental, as the Syndicate abandoned further exploration of the area after the first two unsuccessful seasons of work by a team of Belgian geologists. And the concession was formally terminated by him in 1928 after due notice served on the concessionaire without response on his part.

Nevertheless, in the greatly changed conditions of 1930, it seemed possible that some oil company might be ready to make a substantial down payment for the right of re-exploring eastern Arabia, especially as oil had been found in one of the islands of Bahrain; and the king's main need at the time was for some ready money to enable him to ride out the economic storm until the re-establishment of the pilgrimage on a more profitable basis. He certainly did not look further than that; nor was he fired by any spark of optimism as regards the probable outcome of any such enterprise. His more imaginative Finance Minister took a rosier view of the prospects; and in a mood of more than ordinary depression the king agreed to take the first step

in the desired direction. It so happened that Mr Charles Crane, the American millionaire and philanthropist, who a decade earlier had shown his sympathy for the Arabs in connection with the scheme of the Allies to place Syria under a French mandate against its will, was in Cairo at this time. He had recently been on a visit to the Yaman, where he had generously helped the Imam's Government in connection with various harbour-improvement and road-making projects; and he had once before, in 1926, visited Jidda in the hope of making the acquaintance of Ibn Sa'ud, who was however at Madina, and unable to arrange a meeting. It was almost certain that he would be only too ready to revisit Jidda, if assured that the king would be there to receive him. And the king agreed that Mr Crane should be informed that he would be at Jidda for a fortnight after the pilgrimage of 1931, which fell that year at the end of April.

The meeting duly took place in an atmosphere of great cordiality: and the economic possibilities of Sa'udi Arabia were discussed in a series of conferences, with the result that Mr Crane offered the king, free of charge for six months, the services of Mr Karl S. Twitchell, a very competent mining engineer, who had been working for him in Abyssinia and the Yaman. Mr Twitchell arrived at Jidda during the summer of 1931; and by the spring of 1932 was able to report with confidence that the hill feature at Dhahran would be worth probing for oil, and that the old abandoned gold-mine of Mahd al Dhahab, half way between Jidda and Madina, had by no means been exhausted by the ancients. His report dealt with many other areas also on promising lines; and he went back to America in the hope of interesting various companies in the exploitation of Arabian minerals. He was himself to remain in Sa'udi Arabia for many years thereafter, actively engaged on various projects for the Government, and is still a frequent visitor to the country.

His report certainly interested the Standard Oil Company of California, which, after some preliminary enquiries regarding the readiness in principle of the Government to grant a concession, sent a representative, Mr Lloyd Hamilton, with Mr Twitchell as his technical adviser, to conduct negotiations on its behalf. The intention of the Government to discuss a concession for the exploitation of its mineral resources was given

due, though discreet, publicity; and Mr Hamilton was followed to Jidda by Mr S. H. Longrigg, representing the 'Iraq Petroleum Company, and by Major Frank Holmes, for the Eastern General Syndicate, which, as already noted, had once had the oil concession for a song. The prime condition posed by the Government in connection with the new negotiations was that the successful competitor should make a down payment of £100,000 gold on signature of an agreement, while continuous prospecting was also stipulated. The whole issue turned on the down payment; and the immediate withdrawal of the Eastern General Syndicate, and the refusal of the I.P.C. to raise its bid above £10,000, left the Standard Oil Company in sole possession of the field with an offer of £50,000 gold. After much further bargaining and discussion of details the concession was duly signed on May 3rd, 1933, by 'Abdullah al Sulaiman, the Finance Minister, and Lloyd Hamilton. And not long afterwards a gold-mining concession was negotiated by Mr Twitchell on behalf of an Anglo-American group.

In connection with the latter, extensive prospecting reduced the scope of profitable exploitation to the single ancient mine of Mahd al Dhahab, whose productivity had reached the point of exhaustion by 1953, after providing a modest contribution to the revenues of the State, which in the end had shared with the Company a total net profit of some \$10 millions. Another mine, at Dhalm near Muwaih, was favourably reported on in later years, and developed at considerable expense on Government account, only to prove a complete failure: the total produce of the enterprise being the equivalent of 900 sovereigns (180 oz. of gold or 36,000 *Riyals*) against an estimated actual expenditure of about 30 million *Riyals*! The barrier range of the Hijaz, and its flanks on both sides, are thickly dotted with the gold-mines of the past; but it would seem that the ancient miners of King Solomon and the 'Abbasid Califs had picked every pocket of the precious material, leaving nothing for their successors. And even the profits of Mahd al Dhahab were largely drawn by modern methods from the immense mass of tailings, from which the old miners had been unable to extract all the gold.

The oil story was very different: a veritable romance, surpassing the most improbable tales of the *Arabian Nights* in its astonishing evolution from the first laborious steps of the American geologists in the desert to the discovery and exploitation of

a liquid Eldorado, far down in the bowels of the earth. Volumes would be needed to tell the whole story, which from this point, and for the purposes of this work, can be summarised quite briefly. 'He asked for water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish!' The king was well content with his windfall, and had no exaggerated ideas about his future prospects: but the Company was out for bigger game, and its sleuths went forth in search of the hidden treasure. In 1935 the existence of oil in commercial quantities was established at Dhahran; and one of the early bores produced an impressive gusher, which sent public optimism rocketing up to the skies. Production began in 1938, and by the following year had reached a volume of about a million tons *per annum*, which meant an annual royalty revenue of £200,000 gold (say £st. one million, or more or less according to the free market rate). But such fortune was too good to last. With the outbreak of war, the policy of the western Allies necessitated the freezing of production at the level already reached, while further injury to the interests of Sa'udi Arabia resulted from the stoppage of the pilgrimage when Italy entered the war on the enemy side. It is true that the losses thus imposed on Ibn Sa'ud's Government by Allied strategy were offset generously enough by the gifts of Britain and America, to say nothing of American technical aid in the development of various projects of permanent value to the country; and the standard of luxurious living in war-time Arabia was probably higher than in any other country in the world, with the possible exception of America itself.

Nevertheless Sa'udi Arabia, naturally enough, resented the unilateral curtailment of its own resources; but the withdrawal of Italy from the war, and the effective containment of Germany in the west made the resumption of the pilgrimage and the removal of the ban on oil production possible in 1944. The sequel has been fantastic: production increased by leaps and bounds, until by 1952 the million tons of the war years had become forty millions! On the original concession basis this would have meant an annual income of £st. 40 millions; but the introduction of Income Tax, and a recently negotiated agreement, now standard throughout the Middle East, to divide the oil revenues between the Government and the Company on a fifty-fifty basis, have about doubled the amount receivable by the

former. Production at something like this rate is likely to be maintained in the foreseeable future,* though many other considerations have now to be taken into account. Of these the absorptive capacity of the world market for oil is an important item, as also the complicated currency situation in the world, which has to some extent withdrawn from Sa'udi Arabian oil the privilege of being a purely dollar commodity. Moreover development in 'Iraq and Kuwait (the latter a fantastic producer of oil for its size) has kept pace with that of Sa'udi Arabia; while Persia, temporarily out of the oil market altogether, will soon be operating again on a large scale, and competing for markets. Qatar too is a rising producer, while Bahrain, which started the ball rolling, seems to be maintaining its position as a producer and a refiner.

The great Wahhabi lived to see the meagre £50,000 of his first years at Riyadh (1902-12) double itself to £100,000 with the conquest of al Ahsa (1913/25), and rise steeply to an average of about four to five millions after the occupation of the Hijaz (1926/37). This was increased by a further million with the early oil royalties (1938/44) without taking account of the war-time financial gifts of Britain and America; and from then onwards the pace became breathless with the result that in the last year of his reign he had the satisfaction of seeing the income, on which he had started life as an absolute monarch, multiplied 2,000-fold to the respectable sum of about £100 millions a year.† At neither extreme of his life did Ibn Sa'ud's income suffice for his generous conception of the functions and obligations of a ruler; but he himself always looked back on the first decade of his reign as the best years of his life, while at the latter end physical disabilities and the cares of wealth combined to weigh down the broad shoulders, which had borne their heavy burden of responsibility so buoyantly through the years of stress and strain. The political and economic transformation of Arabia within half a century was an achievement of which any man might be

* Figures published for 1953 disclosed a total production of 41 million tons of crude oil. And the result of the first three months of 1954 suggest an annual rate of about 45 million tons.

† The first published budget of the realm showed an estimated revenue of £st. 21½ millions for the year 1947-8 including £st. 14 millions from oil. The budget estimates for 1951 were for £st. 49 millions, including £st. 18 millions from oil, and £st. 16 millions from income tax. The total had risen to £st. 100 millions for 1952, since when no budget figures have been published.

justly proud; but he himself never liked the pomp and ceremony, which had put him on a pedestal apart from the good days and the good companions of his prime: nor indeed the new ways, to which he had to submit as the price of his own greatness.

Slowly but surely the world was making its way towards the second world war. The Taif days had witnessed the negotiation of a treaty of friendship with Germany, and the German Minister at Baghdad was also accredited in the same capacity to the court of Sa'udi Arabia. Treaties with Italy and France were also well advanced in the drafting stage, with a view to their completion and signature in Rome and Paris during a tour of Europe planned for the Amir Faisal in 1931. This was his third visit to the countries of the west; and on this occasion his travels embraced Poland, the Soviet Union and Turkey. A Polish mission, led by Count Raczinski and including the Grand Mufti of the country's Muslim population, had visited Jidda some time before; and in September Ibn Sa'ud himself had gone down from Taif to meet a Polish vessel bringing a consignment of arms ordered by the Government. This transaction was one of those affected by the moratorium on all Government debts, while the war and the consequent change in Poland's status resulted in the discontinuance of payments; and the greater part of the debt has never been paid. Russia was of course active during the early 'thirties in trying to establish trade with the Arab countries, notably Sa'udi Arabia and the Yaman; and she came to the rescue of Ibn Sa'ud's Government, when its credit was at a low ebb, with a shipment of oil fuels, and other goods, whose dumping on the market at cut prices produced a strong protest from the Jidda mercantile community: the Government being forced to take action to discourage such ventures thereafter.

By 1938 the Soviet authorities had realised that their hopes of establishing a base for political propaganda by unprofitable trading activities were vain; and in that year the whole of the diplomatic organisation operating in the Arabian area was recalled to Moscow to account for its failure, and its personal peculations. With the exception of a single Legation doctor, who disobeyed the order and took refuge in Islam to join the Sa'udi medical service, the whole staff was liquidated on arrival home, including Hakimoff and his successor, as Minister at Jidda, Tuyimetroff, and various ladies employed in the two missions. By this time Turkey, in spite of the prejudice created by

her attitude towards religion, was in diplomatic relations with Sa'udi Arabia; and Faisal's visit to the country was an act of courtesy, though it was not until after the death of Kamal Atatürk in 1938 that the relations between the two States were placed on a normal footing.

The Italo-Abyssinian war of 1935/6 was to subject Ibn Sa'ud's belief in the altruism of Great Power policy to a severe strain; and right up to the final *débâcle* of Addis Ababa and the annexation of Abyssinia, he had stoutly refused to credit the view of many that Great Britain would stand by and allow the unimpeded consummation of the tragedy. As for the League of Nations, of which Sa'udi Arabia was never a member though it used to receive much of its incidental literature (on topics such as slavery and the rights of women, among others), Ibn Sa'ud never had any illusions about its ability to protect the rights of small nations, or even to prevent war, which he regarded as a natural concomitant of human existence, recurring at intervals. The experience of the first world war had taught the Arabs that the quarrels of the mighty might be turned to good account by the feeble; and the second war did nothing to undermine that comfortable doctrine, while its sequel convinced Ibn Sa'ud that a third war was imminent and inevitable. He was indeed critical of the Allies for delaying action until the enemy might become too strong to be attacked with impunity.

He himself had no doubts as to the correct policy to pursue in his own and his people's interests in the international sphere, though many of his advisers were perhaps not wholeheartedly in agreement with his views, as they watched the steadily growing power of the Axis States. To him Britain had long been and still was not only the greatest Power in the world, but the only Power whose interests impinged on his own at numerous points. Friendship with Britain was therefore the keystone of his foreign policy; and there was never any question of his convictions being shaken by the views of others: much less of such others departing one jot or tittle from the line prescribed for their observance in their various activities. America of course had not then made her political *début* in Sa'udi Arabia; and no regrets were wasted on the withdrawal of the Soviet diplomatic mission from Jidda. Indeed Ibn Sa'ud's refusal of permission or facilities for the public profession in his territories of any other religion than Islam had been balanced by an unconcealed distaste

for any dealings with a State which publicly professed its hostility to any religion at all. It may be noted in passing that the Soviet representation at Jidda was mainly, if not entirely composed of professing Muslims.

Turkey too, under the Atatürk régime, tended to be regarded askance for the same reason. Ibn Sa'ud's devotion to Britain was of course in no way allowed to interfere with his complete independence in maintaining close and cordial relations with other western countries such as France, Italy, Germany and Holland: the last-named being by no means the least important of the four by reason of its dominion over the East Indies, whence came, or had come before the economic slump, the bulk of the pilgrims to Mecca. And in the Arab world, relations with Egypt had been restored to a friendly basis since 1936, while non-intervention in the affairs of the various mandated territories was a fundamental factor in his dealings with the mandatory Powers. This applied in a special measure to the affairs of Palestine, though, in common with other Arab leaders, he made no secret of his sympathy with the Arab case, while he may have had some qualms about the leadership and methods of the rebellion of the middle 'thirties. In common with them also, he rejected the Peel Commission's proposal of partition in 1937, and the White Paper of 1939. But in general his position seemed to be that he could not, or would not, take any lead in the settlement of the Palestine problem unless specifically invited to do so by the mandatory Power. And Britain never issued any such invitation to the one man, whose prestige alone might have produced an agreed settlement of a thoroughly intractable problem: finally settled in arms a decade later, after Britain's relinquishment of the mandate, in favour of partition!

In this and other connections Ibn Sa'ud was often genuinely puzzled at the attitude of the British Government towards himself and his régime; and sometimes gave voice to his resentment at the lack of reciprocity evoked by his manifest preference for Britain above all foreign Powers. He had made substantial concessions to British susceptibilities in many directions. Without formally relinquishing his rightful claim to the Ma'an-'Aqaba district, he had agreed to respect a *de facto* line of demarcation; he had agreed to a definite boundary between his country and 'Iraq somewhat to the detriment of his own subjects; he had not pressed any claims in the Persian Gulf area which Britain re-

garded as her private sphere of influence and control; he had agreed by treaty to cooperate with the British in the suppression of the slave trade—a concession which he had resolutely refused to incorporate in his treaties with Italy and France; he had not pressed home his victory over the Yaman; and so forth. Yet Britain always seemed to be giving him the cold shoulder; and he could not understand why. He could not understand that his own insistence on the incontestable fact of his absolute independence, both in the domestic and in the foreign fields, constituted a barrier which British sympathy could not surmount.

Nevertheless, when the second world war broke out, he did not hesitate a moment, in spite of his declared neutrality in the struggle, in showing the direction in which his sympathies lay, though he might have profited by adopting a more equivocal attitude. His neutrality was always formally correct; but the German Minister, absent from Jidda at the outbreak of war, was not allowed to return for fear of complications with Allied elements represented there. When Italy came into the war, the Italian diplomatic representative and other residents were transferred to comfortable quarters on one of the Quarantine islands for the same reason, but treated with all due consideration. When some Italian destroyers sought refuge on his shores from a British attack, the crews were duly interned at Taif but not delivered over to the enemy. And when, after the war, Rashid 'Ali Kailani sought sanctuary in Sa'udi territory, he was received as an honoured guest in spite of British efforts to secure his surrender as a war criminal, sentenced to death by an 'Iraq court-martial for his leadership of the rebellion of 1941. In all such matters Ibn Sa'ud had an instinctive perception of the right thing to do; and he did it without fear or favour: sometimes to his own embarrassment. Yet there never was the slightest doubt that throughout the war he hoped earnestly for an Allied victory, and was indeed gravely disturbed by the Allied disasters of 1940 and the following year.

It was at this time that America became seriously interested in Arabia: a Legation being established at Jidda, while a number of President Roosevelt's personal representatives visited Ibn Sa'ud at Riyadh to discuss matters with him and to study the needs of his country. The help given to the Sa'udi Government, in cash and in kind, by the American and British Governments has already been mentioned. But the cementing of an American

political link with Arabia was the outstanding development of these war years: with far-reaching results, which have completely transformed the social and economic structure of the country within a single decade. Ibn Sa'ud's neutrality was fully respected, and it was obvious that no practical advantage to the Allied cause could result from any formal change in his status, even if he were prepared to adopt such a course. President Roosevelt however was well aware of the important rôle Sa'udi Arabia was destined to play in the post-war world. And, with the Allied cause well in the ascendant, there was no further need for the concealment of Ibn Sa'ud's real attitude towards the struggle. King Faruq of Egypt had paid him a visit in the neighbourhood of Madina towards the end of the war, and had invited him to visit Egypt as soon as conditions might be propitious for such a venture. But Fate had other arrangements in store for the great Wahhabi, who went to Egypt in the spring of 1945: not to return the visit of the young Pharaoh, but to meet the great architects of almost certain victory. In the Bitter Lakes of the Suez Canal he visited President Roosevelt on board an American cruiser; and thence he proceeded by car to the Faiyum to visit Mr Winston Churchill, who hailed him as the 'friend in need', who had stood by the British cause in the darkest days of the war. This was a momentous episode in his career: his first sojourn on foreign soil since his visit to Basra thirty years before; his first meeting with the really great ones of the earth; and his first experience of the modern world and its ways. He was then sixty-five years of age, and beginning to feel the impact of rheumatic pain in a knee wounded in a battle of long ago; but he returned home with the President's gift of an invalid chair such as he used himself in his own disability; and from that day to the end he clung to the chair which gave him relief from his infirmity.

During these two meetings with the great war chiefs, he naturally discussed all matters relating to the future of his country and his own attitude towards the world in general. And after his return to Arabia he was called upon to consider and make his decision on a matter of great gravity. Britain and America wished him to play his part in a world which the war had changed out of all recognition by joining an organisation projected for the purpose of ensuring perpetual peace, to which the other independent Arab States had also been invited to

subscribe. But the condition precedent to becoming a founder member of the United Nations Organisation was membership of the Grand Alliance, now engaged in the final stages of bringing the enemy to his knees. To join the alliance all that was required was a formal declaration of war on Germany and Japan, the surviving members of the Axis: but Ibn Sa'ud shrank from the unseemliness, not to say the absurdity, of declaring war on Powers already doomed, with whom his country had no quarrel. Yet in the end he yielded to the diplomatic pressure of his friends; and Sa'udi Arabia joined the ranks of the belligerent nations in name, if not in fact; and in due course attended the San Francisco Conference as a founder member of the United Nations, whose annual assemblies were generally graced by the Amir Faisal in his capacity as Foreign Minister, while on a few occasions the duty of representing the country at these meetings was entrusted to the Sa'udi Arabian Minister (later Ambassador) in Washington, Shaikh As'ad al Faqih, who had previously represented his country at Baghdad. It cannot perhaps be claimed that either Sa'udi Arabia itself or her Arab neighbours have played any effective part in the discussion or settlement of the main problems agitating the post-war world. But the formation of the Arab League, on the general pattern of the greater body, has undoubtedly placed its members, including Sa'udi Arabia of course, in a strong position to influence world opinion in matters affecting the interests of the Middle East, and later the wider area of the Islamic world: not to mention the yet larger group of Arab and Asian countries, which have so often cooperated in New York to protect the interests of many countries, formerly, and in some cases still, under the rule or control of western Powers. There can be little doubt that the United Nations Organisation, even if it should prove powerless to achieve the main objects of its creation owing to the open rift between its leading Powers, has, perhaps unwittingly and to the embarrassment of some of its members, provided an arena in which Asia and Africa can joust on level terms with the giants of the west.

That problem however scarcely concerns Sa'udi Arabia directly for the present, though her voice and vote are, and will always be, at the disposal of the eastern wing of the United Nations in any matter affecting the interests of Islam. The Arab League itself, at its inception, was divided into two blocs by

local rivalries: with Sa'udi Arabia in the camp of Egypt and Syria in opposition to the Sharifian States. But time and events have greatly smoothed out the acerbities dividing the two groups; and Ibn Sa'ud had the satisfaction of knowing before his end that the Arab States had achieved a measure of harmony, which justified his contribution of a right royal sum to the defence of Jordan against aggression by Israel. Nevertheless it may be said in general that he never aspired to any position of leadership in the League, much less of the Arab representation in the United Nations Organisation: or to a seat on the Security Council. His very nature would have balked at the prospect of defeat on a show of democratic hands on any issue, which engaged his honour or self-respect! And, in very truth, he could well afford to leave such problems to other hands, better versed in the strange ways of a new world: on which he could at last look out from the summit of his own ambition, reached by his own unaided efforts, without desire to conquer or despoil.

He had other things to think about, of vital concern to the realm which he had created, and which he still ruled single-handed in the midst of developments entirely foreign to his experience. Age alone, to say nothing of the growing physical infirmity which was already beginning to limit his mobility, must have warned him that time was short for the work which yet remained to do, to place the administration of his country on firm foundations to resist the storms and stresses of the future in a world, which had barely weathered an unprecedented cataclysm, only to find itself confronted by a crevasse of yet more alarming aspect. He was not the man to be daunted by difficulties, which indeed he faced with all the calm that had always characterised him in the battles of long ago. But now he was old and tired and haunted by pain, though an ingrained sense of duty drove him ever onward: almost scorning the help that was ready to his hands in his own sons, many of whom were by now experienced men of the world, and in the numerous officials who had served him so faithfully so long. It is true that the Amir Sa'ud, as crown prince for more than a decade, was his right-hand man in the administration of Najd: and that the Amir Faisal was similarly placed in the Hijaz, with the additional responsibilities of the Foreign Office. But neither of them was left as free as might have been desired in the performance of the functions entrusted to them. In fact 'Abdullah

al Sulaiman, as Finance Minister, was probably the only official of the Government who can be regarded as enjoying independent authority, subject of course to his Majesty's pleasure, both in the administration of the country's finances and also in charge of most of the spending departments of the Government. And practically all the senior personnel of the State, apart from these three, were grouped round the king as his advisers, while the only body operating outside the magic circle of the court was the Advisory Council, sitting in Mecca and consisting of persons nominated to serve by the king on behalf of the principal towns and areas of the Hijaz. This body, as its name implies, was purely advisory, but did a great deal of useful spade-work through the many years of its existence in examining and expressing its opinion on various schemes and proposals emanating from the Minister of Finance or other sources.

This functional *cadre* had worked well enough under the relatively simple conditions of pre-war Arabia, when it was really possible for the king himself to attend personally to any and every problem which could not be disposed of at the lower levels of the governmental structure. And it certainly stands to the eternal credit of Ibn Sa'ud that, at whatever cost of inconvenience to himself, he never ceased to be freely accessible to all his subjects, high and low, rich and poor alike, to hear and redress their grievances, and to help them over their difficulties. That was second nature to him, and, more than that, it was quite astonishing how, in the midst of all his testing and troublesome preoccupations, he could make the time to think of and do a thousand little acts of kindness, for which his memory will ever be revered and blessed by countless people of no or little account. His whole life was dedicated to the service of others; and it was perhaps on that account that he could never trust even the most trustworthy of his servants to assume even part of the burden which he had shouldered all his life.

But the circumstances of his country were now to change with devastating rapidity; and the administrative defences designed under the old order to protect the people from tyranny and corruption proved totally inadequate to cope with the flood of wealth, which so suddenly burst upon the land, to continue with ever-increasing pressure upon every aspect of Arabian life. It would be idle to pretend that there was never any injustice or dishonesty under the old régime: the numbers of 'foreign'

adventurers, ranging from chauffeurs and mechanics to clerks and interpreters, who flocked to the Hijaz to seek their fortune after its conquest by the Wahhabis, would be enough in themselves to belie any such claim. But the blemishes of this earlier period were relatively venial, and indeed were often corrected with suitable severity when they came to the king's notice. The post-war period was, however, a very different matter, though it is perhaps too near to us in time to admit of critical examination in detail without offence to many of those on whom will fall the burden of restoring world-wide confidence in Sa'udi Arabia, whose fair name once stood so high, and that so recently, in the eyes of the nations. And it was not in Sa'udi Arabia alone of the Arab world that wealth gave birth to the twin evils of extravagance and corruption: which in Egypt and Syria have evoked the Nemesis of revolution, accompanied by violent purges, revealing little of credit to their fallen régimes.

In the case of Sa'udi Arabia, it may be admitted in extenuation, the sudden onset of fabulous wealth fell upon a relatively primitive administrative organisation, whose function had hitherto been to balance the meagre resources of the country against the ever-growing needs of a realm, which by conquest and expansion had taken its place in a world, whose standards of living and public service were very different from anything within the experience of Arabia before that time. It was indeed very much to the credit of Ibn Sa'ud's organisation that, up to the end of the war period, it had materially raised the level of the country's prosperity and efficiency at the expense of a very small budget deficit, in the shape of a public debt which could have been liquidated at will by economies of expenditure out of the revenues of a single normal year. But wealth brought its temptations, which soon exposed the weakness of a system so entirely dependent on the will of an absolute monarch, and devoid of any of the technical devices of accountancy, audit, reserve-building and the like, which normally enable established national governments, great commercial companies, and even wealthy individuals, to carry substantial burdens of debt without impairing their credit in the world. The Finance Department, under the admittedly skilful direction of 'Abdullah al Sulaiman, was soon reduced to the status of an agency for producing funds for this scheme or that, without regard to the merits of the schemes themselves or to the genuine availability

of the money required for them. Every departmental chief was, as it were, a law unto himself, subject to the king's over-riding pleasure; and there was no government to coordinate the work or requirements of the departments except the king himself, who was obviously over-loaded with other preoccupations, and certainly not in a position to assess the capacity of the treasury to meet all the demands made on its resources. Thus, the Finance Department gradually emerged as the controlling authority in respect of all departments of State not within the direct purview of the king himself, whose requirements inevitably took priority over all other claims: the residue of resources being available for disbursement by the Finance Minister at his discretion for other schemes and requirements, for which it was seldom or never sufficient. It is scarcely surprising in these circumstances that, after a decade of astonishing prosperity, the Sa'udi Government is still without any reserve fund whatsoever, while carrying a public debt running into many tens of millions of pounds. The root of the trouble is unquestionably to be sought in the wave of extravagance which swept over the country on the rising tide of royalties from oil: seeping irresistibly into every stratum of society, and flattening all the defences of its economy, with the inevitable reaction of steeply rising prices for all the necessities and luxuries of life. The saturated soil could only breed the brine of corruption, which permeated every branch of the public life of the land: turning to ashes 'the earthly hopes men set their hearts upon', when the new era of Wahhabi rule dawned on the Hijaz, but two decades back. The old weeds of vice ruthlessly trampled down and uprooted by the old desert fanatics, were flowering again on the scene of their historic triumphs, and far beyond its borders in their own ancestral acres.

It is astonishing, and perhaps significant, that the growth of these evils, in a country which had resolutely resisted any form of foreign penetration during the four or five millennia of its known history, should have coincided with the impact of an all-embracing social revolution, consciously based on western, but mainly American, models and ideals; and largely inspired by American technological, financial and economic cooperation in the development of all the natural resources of the land. Whatever may be thought of the merits of the change, involving as it does the abandonment of one of the oldest cultures in the world

for the latest incarnation of a purely secular and mechanical dispensation—and the Arabs of today have no doubt whatever about the superiority of the latter over the former—it will scarcely be denied that the revolution has flowered too rapidly to absorb more than a veneer of the new civilisation in place of the precious traditions of an ancient culture, which is rapidly being relegated to the limbo of forgotten causes. If the growth of urban populations, the development of an industrial proletariat, and the realisation of public works such as railways, roads, water-supplies, electric power for lighting, air-conditioning, cooking and the like: if these things are indeed the hallmark of prosperity, then there is no doubt whatever that Sa'udi Arabia, at the end of Ibn Sa'ud's great reign, was more prosperous absolutely, and even relatively, than the country had ever been at any time since the world began. But physical well-being is surely not the only, or even the chief, criterion of the greatness of a people, as America knows full well if we may judge by her generous attention to the things of the spirit and the mind. And the Arabs should never allow themselves to forget that in fact they have never been so great as when in ancient times they laboured in those same fields to produce the so-called Roman alphabet of humanity, and the monotheistic creed which has conquered most of the world.

It is not really difficult to diagnose the causes of the disappointments of the last decade of the reign just ended. Briefly they can be summed up as the faults of the qualities of a great man: a man so incomparably great in his own sphere, so genuine in his religion, so zealous of his own good name and his people's welfare, that he could trust no-one of his servants and subjects to serve him with the zeal and competence which he himself displayed in serving them: 'the chief of a tribe is its servant', according to one of his favourite quotations. Himself an expert in every aspect of desert-craft, with none to rival him, and no mean scholar in divinity: he came to the problems of the modern world as an amateur, undaunted by the magnitude of his responsibilities, and without a single trained administrator among the staff which helped him to carry the burden of State through these later years. More and more he was forced by circumstances to rely on himself alone: almost unconscious of the creeping infirmities of age, which must at times have made his burden intolerable. It scarcely perhaps occurred to him that

the time would come when he could bear it no longer; and he shrank instinctively from the risk of transferring it to other shoulders. The one thing needed by the country, from the time when the weight of wealth began to disturb its foundations, was a stable government: to ensure the honesty of current administration, and the continuity of domestic and foreign policy into the new age, when other hands would hold the helm. No such government was ever formed, until the angel of death stood at his door with the dread summons to a meeting with his Lord. It is of course true that the Amir Sa'ud, as crown prince, and the Amir Faisal, as Viceroy of the Hijaz and Foreign Minister, had during the last few years been increasingly relieving their father of much of the day-to-day business of administration in various spheres. But the main problems, which called for responsible and effective handling in the interests of the State, had remained in the sole prerogative of the king. The last-minute creation of a government, with the crown prince as Prime Minister, and the Amir Faisal as Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, set a pattern for the future, but was obviously too late to remedy within the king's lifetime the strains and stresses which time had imposed on the fabric which he had built up single-handed by the labours of half a century.

To return from this discussion of the general administrative situation of the last decade of Ibn Sa'ud's life to the beginning of the post-war period: one of the king's first preoccupations, when the world was once more free of war, was his promised visit to Egypt in response to King Faruq's invitation on the occasion of his visit to Madina and Yanbu'. The visit took place in January 1946 amid demonstrations of enthusiasm and affection, which deeply touched the still warm heart of the old lion of the desert. And the friendly relations established by him with the young Pharaoh, and his Ministers, redounded greatly thenceforth to the advantage of Sa'udi Arabia, which has ever since counted on the technical and material assistance of its neighbour for the development of the amenities of the Hijaz in the interests of the pilgrims and for the maintenance of the holy places. The assassination of Nuqrashi Pasha, the Egyptian Prime Minister at the time, some years afterwards was felt by the king as a personal loss; while the Egyptian revolution of July 1952, and the untimely fall of King Faruq, were regretted

more for personal reasons than from any specific reaction to the merits of the episode. And in due course, during the pilgrimage of 1953, General Muhammad Najib, as President of the Egyptian Republic, was received with all the honour due to a sovereign ruler, both by the king and the crown prince.

Apart from the practical help of the Egyptian authorities, there is no doubt that the green fields and grand buildings of the country left a deep impression on an Arabian monarch who had never seen the like in all his life. In addition the Amir Faisal and many of his brothers and other princes had recently returned from the United Nations inaugural meeting at San Francisco, full of admiration and astonishment at all they had seen in the New World. And it was soon the Amir Sa'ud's turn to make an extended tour of America, from which he returned with far-reaching visions of what might be done in his own country: in expert agriculture, electrification, transport arrangements and the like. All these impressions were before long to have their influence on Arabia, as soon as the oil revenues began to flow in a strong and steady stream. Gardens and palatial villas were laid out at Riyadh with all the amenities and appurtenances of the wealthiest citizens of the United States; cuttings and seed from the New World were nursed into life in the ancient desert sand for the adornment of country houses; diesel and electric pumps were brought in on a generous scale to provide water for the ever-increasing agricultural activity, of which the model farm in the Kharj province, organised and administered by American experts, is an outstanding example; a vast new irrigation and agriculture enterprise in the 'Asir Tihama is still in the early stages of its development. Taif and the Kharj province have become impressive military training centres, with American instructors, who recently replaced an earlier British mission; and a new munition factory has been set up in al Kharj under the auspices of a French firm. The king's great dream of a railway linking the Persian Gulf coast with Riyadh was realised by the end of 1951: and instructions were immediately issued by him to the American engineers to survey an alignment for its extension *via* the Qasim province and Madina to Jidda and Mecca. The last two towns have for about fifteen years been connected by a tarmac road, while the first hundred kilometres of a first-class road from Jidda to Madina have recently been completed by a British firm, to the great advan-

tage of the pilgrims and the heavy ordinary traffic between the two places.

In short it may be said that closer contact with the 'civilised' world and the almost miraculous discovery of the necessary means to 'progress' have combined in the last decade of the king's reign to create a social and economic revolution, far surpassing the wildest dreams of those who saw the Wahhabi armies march into Jidda little more than a quarter of a century ago. *Cedunt arma togae!* For years after that event the military aspect of the occupation was little in evidence; but slowly and surely public and official opinion began to favour the recruitment and organisation of a 'regular' army, drilled and dressed after the manner of Europe, to take the place of 'Wahab's rebel horde', which had carried the banner of Ibn Sa'ud through victory after victory to the uttermost ends of the land. It was never actually disbanded, though it was consigned to decent retirement until in recent years it has been nominally resuscitated as a camel corps, known as *al Jihad* and incorporating the levies which the towns, villages and districts of Najd are still under legal obligation to supply to the Government at need. Its camps are to be seen here and there in suitable places, where water and pasture are available for the camels, to which a proportion of motorised transport has been added for the carriage of supplies and equipment. And its command is at present held by Majid ibn Khut-haila, of earlier Ghatghat fame: mellowed by the general prosperity of the land, but still a mighty man of valour and desert-craft, whose services and those of his ilk might have been employed with advantage on certain occasions in these latter years, had not the king shrunk in his old age from resorting to the weapons which had served him so well in his youth. It was to the 'regular' forces that he entrusted the guarding of his frontiers on the marches of the 'civilised' world, with their motorised battalions and armoured cars and artillery; and in fact there has been little enough for them to do, apart from sporadic police duties and the control of smuggling. In the larger towns and settled areas the now considerable garrisons devote most of their time to training, and ceremonial duties, while the charms of music, played by reasonably competent bands, have for some time been admitted, in a once musicless land, to relieve the tedium of drills and parades, to attract recruits, and to entertain the populace.

The only occasion on which any part of this force, reputed to be of the strength of a dozen divisions, has been used on active service was during the Palestine war of 1948: when a token contribution of a single battalion was incorporated in the Egyptian section of the Arab army during the operations against the Jews, and subsequently had the honour of taking part in the 'victory march', which graced the streets of Cairo in celebration of an occasion, of which ever since

'Folks in office at the mention fret,
And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame.'

The failure of the Arab armies to rescue Palestine from the Jews is popularly attributed by Arab apologists to the machinations of Britain, which had in fact divested itself of all mandatory responsibility for the country before the struggle began, and had left a clear field for the decision of the matter by the arbitrament of war. The real reason for the Arab collapse in a struggle, in which their ultimate triumph would seem to have been a foregone conclusion, was partly the lamentable fact of the divided counsels of the States concerned, but mainly the venality and corruption of the authorities responsible for the supply of serviceable weapons and adequate supplies to the forces engaged. The recent revolutions in Syria and Egypt stem indeed from general recognition of the justice of this once unpalatable verdict; and, if there should still be any doubt on the subject, the following quotation from a speech of one of the Egyptian revolutionary leaders should be sufficient to remove it from any unprejudiced mind. Speaking at Alexandria on December 13th, 1953, as widely reported in the press of the Arab countries including that of Sa'udi Arabia, Colonel Jamal 'Abdul-Nasir said: 'We ourselves are responsible for the loss of Palestine, and our leaders were the principal agents in losing it. We did nothing but make speeches and hold meetings. We used to say that we would throw the Jews into the sea, but we didn't do it. . . .' So far as Sa'udi Arabia was concerned it may fairly be said that, however single-minded the whole population may have been in its hostility to the Jews and in its devotion to Palestine as part of the Arab heritage, the attitude of the Government can only be described as somewhat platonic, while the king himself often criticised the policy and the leadership of the Arab movement both during the mandatory period and in the short interlude

which resulted in the creation of the State of Israel. He yielded to none in his devotion to Palestine; but he would never budge from his considered policy of keeping clear of all entanglements with the mandatory Powers which emerged from the first world war.

At the other end of the Arabian peninsula, the king's relations with the Yaman and its venerable ruler had never ceased to be cordial and helpful since the signing of the treaty of Ta'if in 1934. But here again he steadily disclaimed any responsibility for intervention in the quarrels over disputed territory or boundaries, which so often during these years clouded the relations between the Imam Yahya and the British authorities in Aden. On the other hand he evinced no sympathy for the 'democratic' movement, directed against the autocratic régime of the Imam Yahya, under the leadership of the latter's son, the Amir Ibrahim, whose intrigues, conducted from the safe refuge of Aden, filled him with disgust and apprehension. And incidentally the efficiency of the king's intelligence service was somewhat dramatically demonstrated on January 16th, 1948, when he was able to scout as totally untrue a report emanating from Aden, *via* Baghdad and Cairo, of the assassination of the Imam Yahya, and the formation of a 'democratic' government, with Saiyid 'Abdullah ibn al Wazir as Prime Minister and the Amir Ibrahim as President of a republic. In view of later events, it was obvious that some plot, arranged for this date and assumed by the conspirators at Aden to have been successfully executed, had miscarried. When however on February 17th of the same year the aged Imam and his Prime Minister, 'Abdullah al 'Amari, were actually ambushed and murdered, while out for a drive, Ibn Sa'ud had the news at Riyadh within an hour or so of the occurrence of the tragedy, and a full day or more ahead of all the world's news services. His reaction was characteristic: a studied silence in response to a telegram, received next day, from 'Abdullah ibn al Wazir, announcing the 'death' of the Imam, and his own election as Imam and King of the Yaman as a constitutional monarch, to rule through a council of Ministers and an elected Assembly representative of the country's population. This message, repeated to all the other Arab States, contained also an appeal for the immediate despatch of any aeroplanes available to help in the maintenance of order and security. The Arab League hastened to nominate a commission

to investigate the causes and consequences of the trouble on the spot: flying *via* Jidda, where it broke its journey to visit the king at Riyadh at the same time as a deputation from the Yaman usurper, consisting of his nephew, 'Abdullah ibn 'Ali, Shaikh Fadhil al Wartalani of Moroccan provenance, and some others. By this time the rightful heir to the Yaman throne had reached Hajja from his official seat at Ta'izz, and was making good progress in rallying the tribes and townsfolk to his cause; and the position of the usurper was becoming desperate, as his frantic appeals for help to Aden and Riyadh, the Arab League and Britain, America and even Russia, were sufficient to indicate. In fact he had little but the moral support of the *Ikhwan al Muslimin* delegation from Egypt, which had already arrived at San'a, while other Egyptian aeroplanes had landed at some risk to their occupants, owing to the presence of Badawin elements intent on loot, to carry off the members of the Egyptian educational mission, which had been in the Yaman for some time. The appeals of 'Abdullah ibn al Wazir and his chief lieutenants, the Amir Ibrahim and Muhammad al Kibsi, fell on deaf ears; and Ibn Sa'ud made no secret of his own attitude to the delegation enjoying his hospitality at Riyadh. 'You,' he said quite bluntly, pointing his finger at his unwelcome guests, 'you are murderers! How can you expect me to approve or condone your crime?' It was all over on March 12th, when the Amir 'Abbas, a brother of the rightful king, Imam Ahmad ibn Yahya, entered San'a with his troops, and forced the surrender of 'Abdullah ibn al Wazir and his friends. The usurper's delegation left Riyadh crestfallen and humiliated, and did not return to the Yaman; while the Arab League representatives, having now no further need to go to San'a, returned to Egypt. On March 21st, 'Abdullah ibn al Wazir and his fellow-conspirators were transferred in chains to Hajja, the new king's headquarters, and thrown into various dungeons to await the verdict of the Shar' court, and the inevitable execution of its sentence, which brought the tragic crisis in the affairs of the Yaman to an end on April 8th, 1948. Ibn Sa'ud, who might well have taken advantage of the trouble to occupy the Yaman in the interests of peace, hastened to extend the hand of sympathy and friendship to the new king, whose son and heir, Muhammad Badr, who had incidentally been involved in the conspiracy against his grandfather, visited Sa'udi Arabia at the end of 1953 to con-

vey the condolences of his father and his country on the passing of a king who had been so good a friend.

Ibn Sa'ud at this time was firmly convinced that the Great Powers were working inexorably towards a third world war, which he himself saw, and indeed welcomed, as the only possible outcome of the thinly veiled hostility of the western Powers towards the Communist world. And once again he ranged himself without disguise on the side of the west, America and Britain in particular, though he found it difficult to understand their reluctance in coming to grips with the enemy when they enjoyed an overwhelming advantage over him in the matter of atomic weapons. The use of these to destroy whole populations in a good cause never struck him as immoral. *Mutatis mutandis* man has done much the same sort of thing down through all the ages of civilisation. He even regarded the emergence of Communism and the instruments of mass destruction, not only as presaging the end of civilisation, but as a divine warning of the approach of doomsday itself. But it was in a slightly different connection that, on a certain occasion in 1948, he actually expressed the hope that the last day might come in his time! 'Who would have thought even a few years ago,' he exclaimed, 'that I should live to see liquor and drugs coming into Riyadh, when we used to condemn even the use of tobacco? The fault lies not with others,' he admitted bitterly, 'but in myself. If it were in my power to choose, I would have doomsday now!' It was indeed true that the austerity of yore had by now worn very thin in the matter of certain prohibitions, while a number of serious scandals in high places had forced the Government to take formal notice of a situation which was scarcely creditable in the setting of a Wahhabi State. Hitherto the European community had enjoyed the privilege, allowed to it by its religion, of importing liquor in reasonable quantities for its own use, while the importation of it by Muslims continued to be strictly forbidden. This measure of prohibition had long and notoriously been a dead letter in practice, while the steps taken by the Government in 1952 to restore the formal validity of the law on the subject can scarcely be regarded as either reasonable or effective. The total prohibition, without the slightest warning, of the importation of all alcoholic liquor into the country scarcely affected those sections of the local community which had long been accustomed to procuring the refreshment they needed by

devious channels; but it did completely deprive the European community of an indulgence, to which it had been long accustomed, and to which it was reasonably entitled. It is difficult to think that the initiators of the now dry régime were not actuated by xenophobe considerations, while the very fact that liquor is still procurable in the principal towns of the State at fancy prices provides sufficient evidence that local purveyors of the forbidden stuff have still their ways and means of procuring supplies, to their own great profit. It is obviously out of the question for the Government to condone the consumption of alcohol by Muslims in Sa'udi Arabia, but it is surely quite inappropriate that only Muslims should have any alcohol to consume.

Apart from such domestic issues, including occasional drives by the Commenders of Virtue to enforce more regular attendance at prayers and the contentious politics of the Great Powers, Ibn Sa'ud was inevitably mainly interested in and concerned with the troubles of his neighbours. The early months of 1948 had created an interesting situation in 'Iraq, where student and working-class demonstrations against the proposed new treaty with Great Britain had resulted in serious casualties, and the fall and flight of the responsible Prime Minister, Saiyid Salih al Jabr. Nuri Pasha had also disappeared from the public view, though he duly returned some months later when the storm had subsided. And it was left to the Regent, Amir 'Abdul-Ilah, to calm the passions of the people by declaring that the treaty, signed on board H.M.S. *Victory* at Portsmouth on January 16th, would not be ratified by him if they did not like it, or the clauses in it authorising the continuance of an earlier arrangement for the occupation by the British of various air-bases in 'Iraq. The concomitant troubles in Palestine have already been sufficiently discussed; but it should be mentioned that, in deference to the doctrine of Arab solidarity in such matters, the king authorised the collection of subscriptions for the Palestine cause, and appointed his son Muhammad to preside over the committee charged with the task. The fund was opened by a gift of £5,000 from the ladies of the court; and an interesting commentary on the immense wealth already accumulated by local merchants in these comparatively early days of the oil flood, including of course the war period when large fortunes were made by profiteers, is provided by the fact that two Jidda merchants were able to contribute £25,000 each to the fund, while

another gave £10,000. In addition to this monetary aid for the war in Palestine, a considerable gesture of recruitment for personal service therein was made by the king in December 1947, when he issued instructions to all the provincial governors of Najd—the holy land of the Hijaz being specifically excluded from the scope of the scheme—to open registers for volunteers between the ages of twenty and fifty, and to invite two leading chiefs of each of the tribes to visit Riyadh for the coordination of the necessary effort.

A force of 300,000 men was confidently expected to emerge from this measure; but, as has been stated above, the only Sa'udi Arabians who saw any service in Palestine were those of the 'regular' battalion, which was brigaded with the Egyptian forces. The attitude of America and England over the whole problem, the lobbying which marked the proceedings of the United Nations, and the obvious determination of King 'Abdullah of Trans-Jordan, soon to become king of Jordan, to take the lead of the Arab cause, and to occupy what he could of Palestine for himself: all these matters were freely and somewhat querulously canvassed at the court of Riyadh. And the king's personal attitude seemed to vary, according to his mood of the moment, between a conviction that the British would in the end not quit Palestine at all owing to their important oil and strategic interests in the Middle East, and the fear that they might hand over the Arab part of Palestine to King 'Abdullah, or transfer their Palestine garrison to Trans-Jordan to prevent an Arab attack on the Jews. But his own position always remained that, unless he were invited at the highest international level, by which he roughly meant the British Government, to intervene in the Palestine imbroglio, he would take no initiative in the matter, though he would give his blessing to any Arab movement against the Jews: provided that it did not involve a declaration of war on Britain or America.

It was against this generally unsatisfactory international background that, on July 18th, 1950, Ibn Sa'ud celebrated the lunar golden jubilee of his reign as an absolute monarch. The occasion was suitably celebrated in all the countries of the world with which Sa'udi Arabia was in diplomatic relations, with receptions and broadcast eulogies: reflecting the world-wide admiration and affection inspired by the career and character of a man who had led his people out of the wilderness into the

comity of nations. In his own country too elaborate preparations had for some time been going on to mark the golden jubilee of a great reign with an appropriate demonstration of loyalty and gratitude. But the king himself, not wishing to spoil the sport of his people but uneasy about the religious legitimacy of such a celebration, had taken the precaution of consulting the Chief Mufti of Riyadh, Shaikh Muhammad ibn Ibrahim, and his colleagues of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Their verdict was unequivocal and decisive: the concept of a 'golden jubilee' had no validity in the precepts or practices of the Prophet's *Sunna*, and was an invention of the Christians and the Jews; the celebration of such an occasion was therefore unlawful. It was already July 13th, when this authoritative *Fatwa* was communicated to the king in the course of his usual Thursday conference with his prelates; and preparations were far advanced to mark the occasion, including the materials for a monster banquet at Jidda, for which official invitations had already been issued to members of the diplomatic corps, high-ranking government functionaries and civil notables. But orders were immediately issued for the cancellation of all the projected celebrations, and for the distribution of the food earmarked for the feast to the poor and needy of Jidda and its neighbourhood. It may be noted in passing that the solar golden jubilee of the king, falling on January 14th, 1952, appears to have been ignored, not only in Sa'udi Arabia but in the rest of the world.

By that time the Korean war had been going on for about eighteen months, while the situation in the Canal Zone of Egypt was becoming increasingly difficult, though the military *coup d'état* of July 23rd and the fall of King Faruq were yet some six months ahead. Sa'udi Arabia was not directly affected by any of these developments, though its close and cordial relations with Egypt over a considerable period inevitably produced at first a reaction of sympathy and concern for the fallen dynasty and its leading personalities, who had all been actively associated with the king and his Government. But the consolidation of the military revolution and its demonstrated good will towards the interests of Arabia soon reconciled public and official opinion to the *fait accompli*. And the Sa'udi Government was at one with the other Arab States in supporting Egypt's claim for the evacuation of the Canal Zone. The atrocities of January 26th, 1952, however, and some other aspects of the

policy of the Wafd Government of the time came in for some criticism and mild deprecation. As for Korea, the war there was regarded merely as the prelude to the greater conflict which was at least not to come in the king's lifetime; and little interest was shown in the matter after the stalemate position had been reached on the thirty-eighth parallel after the Communist thrust and the American response thereto. The Arab States took no part in the United Nations' gesture of cooperation with the American forces engaged in the struggle, which was regarded as being mainly a test of endurance between the United States and the Soviet Union.

A matter of somewhat greater local importance arose out of the German Federal Government's reparations agreement with Israel. For some time before this a definite trend had been noticeable in Sa'udi policy in the economic field towards an understanding and cooperation with German interests, if only to balance the hitherto virtual monopoly of America. Price and political considerations, as well as some not very successful enterprises entrusted to British firms, had for the time being had the effect of putting the alternative of cooperation with Britain out of court. And the Finance Department, which completely dominated the scene under the vigorous initiative of 'Abdullah Sulaiman and his family, had advanced far on the road to an understanding with various German firms, including that of Philip Holtzmann of Berlin-Baghdad railway fame, in respect of a number of important undertakings, when the treaty hitch occurred. The last-named firm had prepared schemes for the improvement of the harbour at Dammam, and was studying a number of road and railway projects, when the Arab League decided to boycott all German trade and industry: Sa'udi Arabia falling into line with this policy without much conviction regarding its advantages or effectiveness. The Bonn Government however ratified the treaty with Israel, while the wrath of Arabia was turned away with soft words and hospitable entertainment of her protesting deputations. Little by little the idea of a boycott of Germany began to seem less attractive; and by the end of 1952 Sa'udi Arabia was once more extending the hand of welcome to German industrialists, medical men and women, and other specialists. Some time had been lost in proceeding with various schemes; but Arabia has plenty of time before her, to settle down to a steady rhythm of progress and

development. There had indeed, in certain matters, been too much haste and too little consideration in dealing with the problems of the present and the future. And now the king's death has inevitably imposed a pause in State activities, which will enable the authorities of the new régime to take stock of the situation inherited from the past, and to lay its plans for the future in confident expectation of a long period of continuing peace and prosperity. There has however been, as there is long likely to be, no tendency to compromise with the Jews themselves on any issue whatsoever, political or commercial; and the black list of Jewish firms all over the world, with which all dealings of any kind are strictly forbidden in Sa'udi Arabia, has already reached impressive proportions. And it is extremely unlikely that Mr Ben Gurion's swan song and olive branch will produce any alleviation of the bitter enmity which divides the State of Israel from all its Arab neighbours.

Apart from the fact that Ibn Sa'ud had himself in general terms prescribed for his country a policy of cordial cooperation with the Arab League, as from the time of its formation, in all matters of general or special international concern to the Arab countries jointly or severally, it is difficult to assess the extent to which he concerned himself actively in such matters during these latter years, when his attention tended increasingly to be turned inwards to the affairs of his own realm. In all matters appertaining to the maintenance of law and order, to personal rights and wrongs, and to certain schemes of especial appeal to him, such as the construction of the Dammam-Riyadh railway, on which he from the beginning insisted in spite of all arguments advanced against it by the more cautious economists—and it may be admitted now, without entering upon details, that his judgment has been triumphantly vindicated by the astonishing economic relief now enjoyed by the towns and areas served by the railway—Ibn Sa'ud never ceased to exercise a decisive control over the administration of the country. In the wider field of the multifarious interests of the country, however, he became increasingly content to leave the active direction of affairs to the crown prince who, especially after his return from his long visit to the United States, steadily increased in stature until, during the last few years, he became established as the dominant factor in the governance of the realm. The shadow of his great father was always there in the background, with coun-

sel and encouragement, to help him in his difficulties: and to deter the evil-doer, it may be added, from any contemplated wickedness. But it was clear for some years before the end that the sands of time were running out for one who had spent his life in triumphing over tribulation, and who could now do little but watch, with deep apprehension and anxiety, the gathering clouds of a troubled world, in which the future of his own beloved country would depend on other hands than his: less experienced, less skilful, but trained by him in the trade, which he had inherited from his ancestors and practised with consummate distinction. And there was one danger, which he had not been able to exorcise in fifty years of sporadic effort to convince the oldest of his friends that his friendship was sincere. Far away in the extreme south-east of his dominions the little oasis of Buraimi had attracted the covetous eyes of Britain; and the small ill-armed Sa'udi garrison under the local governor, Turki ibn 'Utaishan, had for a twelve-month or so been under close siege by all the queen's horses and all the queen's men, with armoured cars and aeroplanes in support. The name of Buraimi has appeared often enough in these pages as an unit of the Wahhabi realm; and it is no purpose of this volume to discuss the details of the present controversy, which would certainly never have arisen but for the possibility that there may be oil in those desert sands. The British Government claims the area in the names of the Sultan of Masqat and the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi, both of whom own date-groves in the oasis, and who incidentally have no quarrel with Ibn Sa'ud on the issue. The one incontrovertible fact of history is that neither of them has ever exercised any functions of sovereignty in the disputed territory: as will be clear to anyone who cares to study the latest authoritative work on the subject, mentioned in the Introduction to this volume. It is only sad that Sir Winston Churchill of all people should have been the author of an unprovoked act of aggression on one whom he had hailed in bygone years as 'a great friend in need', during the darkest days of the war.

It certainly clouded the last days of the old monarch. He had lived in virtual retirement at Riyadh ever since his last pilgrimage, performed in the sweltering heat of a Meccan summer in September 1951. Obviously ageing and in failing health, besides being now compelled by his knee infirmity to use his wheeled chair for all purposes of locomotion, he had insisted, so

far as possible, on maintaining the studied routine of a lifetime in the matter of being accessible to all his lieges at the appointed times. But he seldom left the precincts of the great palace of al Murabba', though he spent part of the summer of 1952 in the crown prince's country palace of al Badi'a in the valley of Wadi Hanifa. His last considerable public function at Riyadh was his appearance to preside at the formal opening of his own railway in October 1951, while he also attended a few public ceremonies at Taif during the late summer of 1953, whither he had travelled in his own Skymaster to spend what were to be the last few months of his life. In the middle of October he had a serious heart attack, which gave rise to the gravest anxiety among his people, and in a wider sphere whence came telegrams of sympathy and good wishes for his recovery, including one from the Queen of England. On his recovery he insisted on holding his usual public audiences, though these were now limited to one a day in the afternoon, to see and be seen of his people. But a recurrence of weakness towards the end of the month again confined him to his room; and there, at 10.30 a.m. on November 9th, 1953, in the presence of many members of his large family, the great king passed to his rest. The same afternoon the prayers for the dead were read over him in the great prayer-ground of Taif in the presence of an immense congregation of his mourning people. His mortal remains were then conveyed to Riyadh by air, with the Amir Faisal and other sons in attendance: and the same evening, after prayers read over him by the people of his capital, he was committed to the earth of Riyadh: to rest for ever by the side of his father. A great reign was ended; and with it ends this chronicle of the acts and achievements of a great dynasty, which has ruled in Arabia for five centuries, and seems assured to reign for many generations yet to come. The King is dead, but his name liveth for evermore!



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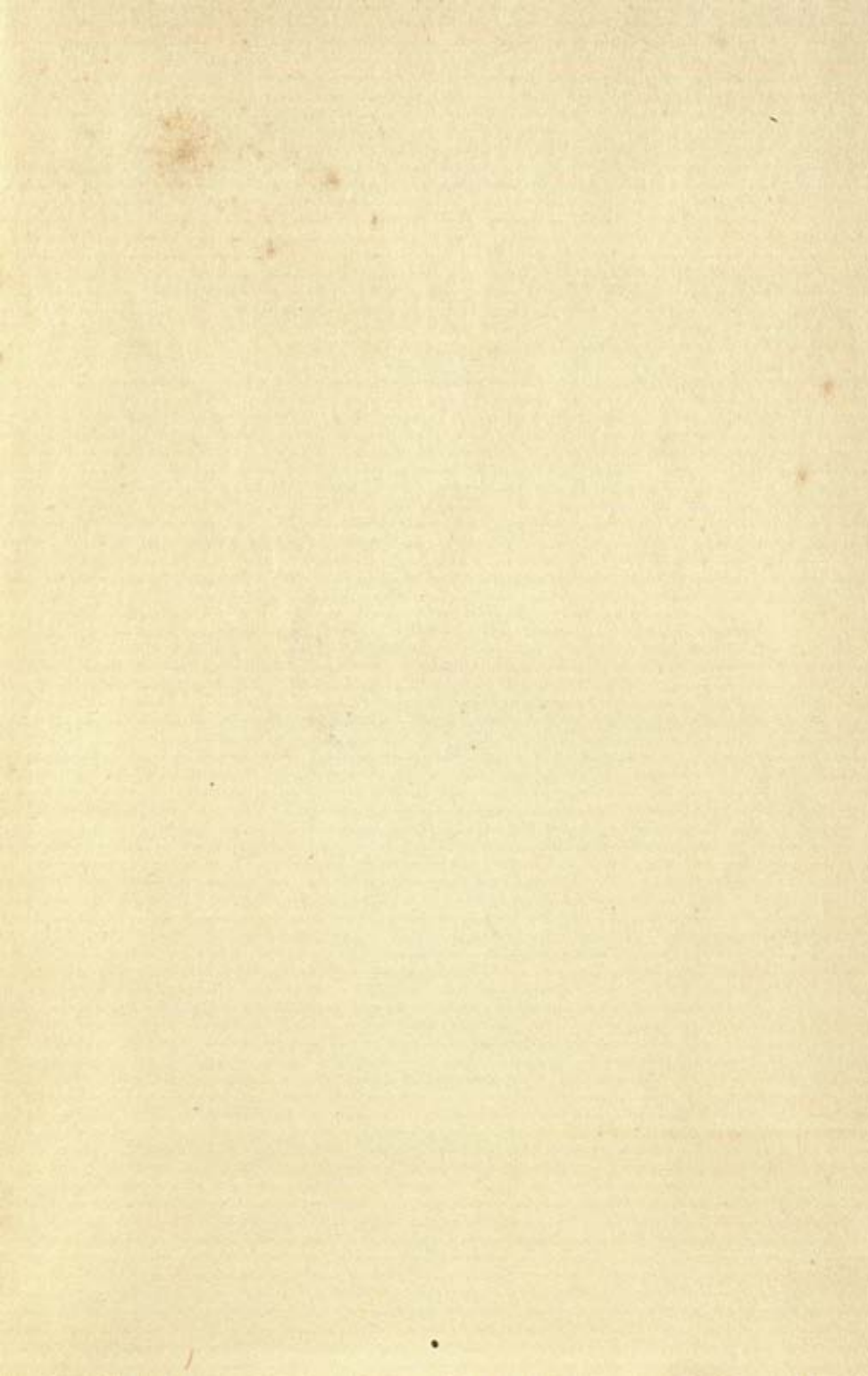
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